

PLUCK AND LUCK

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THE IRON GRAYS; OR, THE BOY RIDERS OF THE RAPIDAN.

By GEORGE JESSE GORDON.
AND OTHER STORIES



He drew a pistol and clapped the muzzle to his head. But, ere he could pull the trigger, Jack sprang forward and dashed his arm. In another moment they were engaged in a desperate struggle in the glare of the campfire.

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The Iron Grays

OR, THE BOY RIDERS OF THE RAPIDAN

By GEN. JAS. A. GORDON

CHAPTER I.—The Boys of the Rapidan.

In the summer of 1778 the British troops made a number of forays into Virginia for the double purpose of securing supplies for their army and overawing the rebellious people. In the absence of any considerable body of patriot troops to oppose them, they had things pretty much their own way. The people who had suffered so much at the hands of the enemy and their Tory friends had repeatedly implored the Continental Congress to send troops for their protection. But that august body had the whole continent finding fault with it, and Washington's little army could not be everywhere at once. At last a delegation called on the commander-in-chief and begged for just one regiment.

"The fate of the country depends on the army being kept up to a point in numbers," he replied to them, "that will enable me to cope with the main army of the enemy. To weaken my army now would be to invite destruction. That I cannot do. Organize the farmers and I will see that they get arms, and if circumstances will permit will also send one or two companies of cavalry."

"General," said a youth, the son of the man at the head of the delegation, "give me authority to get up a company of boys of my age, and I'll see that some of the redcoats find home underground down our way."

The commander-in-chief looked at the youth and saw that he was manly and brave. He liked the way he talked, and said:

"There is more good sense in what you have said and suggested than all I've heard to-day. What is your name, my lad?"

"My name is Jack Randolph. There is my father," said the youth, pointing to the spokesman of the delegation of patriots.

"Yes, he is my son," said the father of the youth.

"You should be proud of him," said the commander-in-chief, as he took a pen and wrote a few lines.

When he had finished writing he handed the piece of paper to Jack, saying:

"There is your authority, young man. I shall expect to hear from you very soon."

Jack took the paper and read:

"Captain Jack Randolph is hereby authorized to organize an independent troop ground some defense and to strike the enemy where not here he can find him.
the arms liston."

Jack's face was all aglow with honest pride when he read the paper.

"I'll strike, and you shall hear of it, general," he said.

"I hope I shall," said the general, as he bowed to the delegation.

They came away not at all satisfied with the result of their mission. Words cannot describe what they had suffered at the hands of the invaders, and to have a nineteen-year-old youth made a captain was, in their estimation, but a poor protection against the foe.

"So you are a captain now, eh?" he said to Jack, on the way back home.

"Yes, father," he said, "and I was never so surprised in my life. But I am going to let the general see that he has made no mistake in making me one."

"Where do you expect to get a command, I'd like to know?"

"Among the boys," was the prompt reply. "I am not so foolish as to think that the men are going to enlist under me."

"But you will have to fight men—the best trained soldiers in the whole world. What can boys do against British soldiery?"

"Yes, that's what I would like to know, too," put in another of the delegation.

"So would I," added a third. "It's all well enough to talk, but the king's soldiers are the best in the world, and are led by men who understand the art of war."

"Those same soldiers have been beaten time and again," said Jack, wheeling in his saddle—they were all on horseback and on their way home—faced his father. "They are no harder to kill than any other men. There is not a man in the whole British army who is a better shot than I am, and there are scores of boys on the Rapidan who can shoot as well as I can. You all seem to be afraid of the very name of 'British soldier.' Help me organize the boys, and we'll show you that a squirrel rifle is better than a musket at all times."

"What! Lead our boys out to be slaughtered by the redcoats!" cried a farmer who had two boys at home who were eager to get into the army. "The less you say about going to war, the better it will be for you, Jack Randolph."

"If men would be free, they must fight for liberty," said Jack. "I am going to call out the boys and we are going to fight if the enemy comes in our way."

"What do you know about war? Leave it to men and——"

"You are a man," retorted Jack. "What would become of the country if all men were like you?"

Mr. Randolph had to interfere to prevent trouble between his son and Farmer Botts, so personal did they become in their remarks.

"Are you going to let him get our boys into trouble with the soldiers, squire?" Botts asked.

"I am not going to interfere with General Washington's plans," said the justice. "He has made Jack a captain and I am going to let him do the best he can to help the cause along."

"I thank you, father, from the bottom of my heart," said Jack. "We boys can shoot as well as the redcoats, and we are going to protect our mothers and sisters from the fiends."

Two days later the delegation reached home, and reported to the farmers on the Rapidan the result of their visit to the commander-in-chief. It was a great disappointment to them. They had counted on a regiment being sent to their relief. They were willing to furnish all the quartermaster's supplies free of charge for the protection the presence of the regiment would give them.

"Jack Randolph made a captain in answer to our prayer for protection!" exclaimed one old man in his indignation. "Nice protection we'll have! When the redcoats hear that we have a boy captain, they will lay down their arms, I suppose."

Jack Randolph mounted a horse block in front of the country store where the meeting was held and sang out:

"General Washington has asked me to call out the brave boys and strike the enemy wherever we can find him. I want none under sixteen years old nor over twenty-one. Every boy must have his own horse and rifle. Now who will join me? Who will help me protect——"

"Count me in for one!" cried Joe Metcalf, stalking forward and taking a position by the side of the horse block.

Ten minutes more and he had forty-two boys around him, and the enthusiasm was at fever heat. A score of men wanted to go with the boys.

"No men allowed!" cried Jack. "Form a company of your own. This is the boys of the Rapidan company. We are going to show you what we can do. Are there any more? Yes, four more. Good! That makes forty-six in all. There are lots of boys who are not here to-day who will come in. I want one hundred. Now all of you mount your horses and let me see how you look."

The boys were beside themselves with enthusiasm. They ran to their horses and sprang into their saddles. Jack looked at them admiringly for a few moments.

"Boys," he sang out, in clear, ringing tones, "about one-half of you have iron gray horses. The other half have all sorts of colors. If we call on our people for iron gray horses, we can get them. We'll call ourselves 'The Iron Grays; or, The Boy Riders of the Rapidan.' What say you? Do you like the name?"

"Yes. Hooray! Hooray for Captain Jack! Hooray for Washington and the Continental Congress!"

The wild enthusiasm of the boys woke up the men, and scores came forward and swapped

horses till every boy had an iron gray. They were splendid horses in those days on the Rapidan, and when forty-six of them stood in line they made a splendid show.

"Now, boys!" cried Jack. "Come here to-morrow with your rifles and powder horns. We must get to work at once. We'll organize to-morrow at noon and elect officers."

"The boy means business," said old Botts, as he looked on and saw that the boys would all flock to Jack's standard.

"Yes," said old man Miller, who kept the store there. "They are all good shots, and if they get a chance at the redcoats some of them will get hurt."

The news spread up and down the river like wildfire, and when Jack met them the next day over one hundred boys were on hand, all eager to become one of the Iron Grays. But some were under sixteen, and he would not let them join. He got an even one hundred, though, and every one had his rifle, bullet pouch, powder horn and iron gray horse.

"Boys, we are one hundred strong!" cried Jack, "and we can whip that number of redcoats every day in the week. You are all good shots. You can hit a squirrel every time in the top of the highest tree in the woods, so there can be no excuse for missing a redcoat. Always be sure of your aim before pulling the trigger. We are now going to elect two lieutenants, sergeants and corporals."

The boys entered into the election with enthusiasm. Joe Metcalf was made second in command and Tom Miller son of the storekeeper, third. Harry Botts was made first sergeant.

His election was barely ended when his father appeared and ordered him to go home.

"You are not going to go with this crowd to be slaughtered!" cried the old farmer, collaring the young sergeant.

Harry would not resist his father, but Captain Jack sang out:

"Put Mr. Botts out of the camp!"

A dozen boys seized him and escorted him to the store, where they left him. He was in a towering rage, but it did him no good. He had to submit, and in a little while he mounted his horse and rode away, leaving his boy to join the Iron Grays as a sergeant. When the election was over with, Jack told them that they would meet again the next day to drill. An old cavalryman, at home on a leave of absence, would drill them. They dispersed and went home, the most eager young soldiers ever seen in that part of Virginia. Captain Jack Randolph rode home accompanied by Joe Metcalf, who lived a half mile beyond him. Their steeds were the best in the country—large, fleet-footed and spirited iron iron grays, which they had trained in many a fox hunt over the hills and dales of the country.

CHAPTER II.—Captain Jack and the Tory's Daughter.

As the youths rode along the road, they talked of the life that had suddenly opened up to them.

"I wish _____ seen the commander-in-

chief, too," said Joe. "He must be a grand-looking soldier."

"Yes. He is the grandest man I ever saw," said Jack. "Over six feet, broad-shouldered and as straight as a rifle barrel. I believe he is strong enough to cut off the head of an ox with a single stroke of his sword."

"Ah! That reminds me—then you and I are to have swords?"

"Yes. All officers are to have swords—you and I and Tom."

"Where will we get them?"

"I'll write to General Washington for them if we don't get 'em any other way."

"It looks to me as if Mr. Martin was a loyalist."

"Yes, and I believe he is, for the British never bother him at all when they come here, though they plunder every other place they can get at."

"That is a sure sign, in my opinion, that he has a secret understanding with them. Jim has not joined us, either."

"No, and he is eighteen, too. But I half suspect that Kittie is a patriot, for I heard her say that Washington was the greatest general in the world."

"I am glad to hear that. She is the prettiest girl in the county."

"Yes, and the best horsewoman, too. She is generally the first in at the death in a fox hunt. But she is an arrant flirt, so John Echols says. I guess he was——"

"Hello, boys!" cried old Farmer Martin, as he came abreast of them.

"Hello, Mr. Martin!" returned Jack.

"They tell me that Washington has made a captain of you, Jack," said the old man.

"Yes, sir; and Joe here is a lieutenant. Isn't Jim going to join us?"

"Well, not that I know of. He has something else to do. You boys are going to get yourselves into trouble if you keep up this playing soldier. The king's troops won't put up with any nonsense from anybody."

"We are not going to put up with any nonsense from them, either, Mr. Martin," said Jack. "They have been plundering our homes long enough. But we notice that they do you no harm when loyalist?"

"No," said the old man, changing color. "I am simply a non-combatant. I don't take sides with either, and that's why they let me alone. If you would all do the same thing, you would not be troubled, either."

"Yes, if we would submit to the tyranny of King George," retorted Jack. "But that we won't do. We are going to free our country of the tyrant, and they who are not for us are against us."

The old man laughed and said:

"You have been listening to some of Patrick Henry's speeches, I reckon. Better take my advice and stay at home, boys. The first thing you know the king's troops will be down here shooting at you."

"Well, maybe we'll be shooting at them at the same time," said Jack. "The boys of the Rapidan are as good marksmen as any in the world."

"But they are not soldiers," said the old man, shaking his head. "Better—— boys—

better be careful," and he rode on toward Miller's store.

"He is a rank Tory," said Jack, looking back after the old man.

"Yes, and he'll be giving information of our movements to the enemy, I fear."

"If he does, and we can get proof of it, we'll send him to Washington to be dealt with. They hang men for that in the army."

Just before they reached Jack's home they heard the patter of a horse's hoofs on the road ahead of them, and a moment later a splendid iron gray horse came round the bend at a swinging gallop, with a young lady seated firmly on his back. "Kittie Martin, as I live!" exclaimed Jack.

She reined up on seeing the two youths, and exclaimed:

"Oh, Captain Randolph, I am so glad we met! Are you really and truly a captain?"

"I am if General Washington can make one," he said, laughing good-naturedly, "and Joe here is a lieutenant."

She made a profound bow to Joe, who returned it with equal ceremony.

"Really!" she laughed. "I shall have to raise a regiment of girls and ask for a colonel's commission. Don't you think it a good idea? Wouldn't I make a good colonel?"

"You would make a good-looking one, but I don't know how you would behave in a fight."

"Why, you don't think I would run away, do you?"

"Yes, if you saw a mouse—the entire regiment would," and all three laughed heartily.

Kittie had nearly fainted at sight of a mouse a month before at the home of one of Jack's cousins, and she remembered it.

"Oh, we are not fighting mice now," she said.

"But really, now, I would go home and stay there. Let the men of the county fight it out with the king's troops. What would we girls do if all the boys are killed off?"

"Marry the old men," said Joe, laughing.

"Bah! No old man for me. They're all married already, anyway."

"Look here, Miss Kittie," said Jack. "Isn't Jim going to join us?"

"No. Mother has forbidden him to do so. He has no desire to be killed."

"Jim is a good shot, and he is no coward, as I know."

"Of course he is not a coward," and she showed plainly that she was proud of her brother. "Are you two coming to the dance next Tuesday night?"

"No. We will all be in camp by that time."

"What! Won't any of those who have joined you be there?"

"No. We will be in camp."

Her countenance fell.

"Then we can't have any dance," she said. "You have broken up the party."

"I am sorry, but we have no spare time for dancing now. All the girls are going to make uniforms for us. Won't you help? They are to be gray like our horses."

"Well, they haven't asked me yet," was the evasive reply. "I am so put out about the party," and she dashed away on her splendid iron gray and was out of sight in another minute.

"Well, she is a strange girl," said Jack. "She is mad because the boys won't be at her dance on Thursday night."

They started homeward again, and at the next bend in the road met a beautiful Indian girl. She looked up at Jack and smiled. He reined up and greeted her.

"I am glad to see Winona," he said. "Her smile is like the sunlight and her eyes like the stars of night. I want her to make me a pair of strong moccasins. I am going on the warpath."

"Winona's heart is glad," said the dusky maiden. "She has not forgotten that the young pale-face saved her life from the panther."

"Winona is right. She should not forget. I cannot forget, either. We are both young, and Winona is as beautiful as the flowers on the banks of the Rapidan. Let her bring them to his home when she has made them, and we will make her heart glad," and with that he rode on with Joe.

He was very fond of using the style of the Indian's conversation when talking with them, and for that reason he was very popular with them. He had rescued Winona from a panther in the forest the summer before, and she had been very grateful to him ever since. The girl disappeared in the woods, and Joe remarked:

"She will get caught in the rain before she reaches the wigwam of her old father."

Jack looked up at the black thunderclouds which had been rapidly gathering, and said:

"She doesn't mind the rain any more than a bird does. The Indians will stop and find shelter whenever rain overtakes them."

Suddenly a long, fiery ribbon shot out of the cloud behind them, and a sharp report followed that caused their horses to leap and prance as if they would run away.

"That must have struck somewhere," said Jack, as he held his splendid charger in hand.

"Hello! Listen! Somebody is coming!" and they listened to the mad rush of a horse on the road behind them. The next moment the riderless horse of Kittie Martin came round the bend at a breakneck speed.

"Good heavens, Joe!" gasped Jack. "Catch that horse and I'll look after Kittie," and he dashed back up the road as fast as his horse could carry him.

On, on he went till he had gone nearly a mile. There he found the unconscious form of the girl in the road. Springing to the ground, he knelt by her side. There was a bruise on her forehead from which a small stream of blood trickled. He laid his ear against her bosom and heard her heart beating.

"She isn't dead," he said. "She has fainted from the fall or fright. If I had some water to sprinkle in her face she would soon recover. Ah, I hear somebody coming! There's several of them. Good Lord! They're dragoons! The redcoats have come again. Kittie, I won't leave you. I must go, but I'll take you, too."

He raised her in his arms and bore her to his horse. He threw her across the horse's neck and then sprang into the saddle.

"Now, Selim, good boy," he said to his charger, "I may never have to ask you to run from the redcoats again. But go now and show 'em your heels—off with you!"

The big iron gray dashed away like a whirlwind, and the dragoons uttered a yell and started in pursuit. Away he went—past his own home—for he dared not stop there, and overtook Joe a half mile beyond.

"The redcoats are coming!" he cried. "Send couriers to tell the Iron Grays to meet at Dudley's spring to-night—every one of them!"

"Is she dead?" Joe asked.

"No," answered Jack, and in another moment he was gone. He was going to take her to her own home, knowing that she would be safe enough there.

Half an hour later he reached her home. She was still unconscious.

"Here's Kittie!" he cried to Jim. "Come and get her!"

"My God!" gasped Jim, as he came up. "What has happened?"

"The lightning frightened her horse. I reckon. He ran away, and I found her in the road. Take her. I must go on. The redcoats are coming down the road."

Jim took his sister in his arms and hurried into the house with her. Jack wheeled and galloped away, and in a few minutes was out of sight.

CHAPTER III.—The Night Attack of the Dragoons.

Joe Metcalf was a youth who had the making of a hero in him. On hearing that the redcoats were coming, and that the boys were to meet at Dudley's spring, he put Kittie Martin's horse in the barnyard and dashed away to order Sergeant Botts to send word to as many of them as he could.

"They've about all got their uniforms made by this time," he said to Harry, when he saw him. "and will be ready for the fight."

"All except me," said Harry. "My mother won't make it for me—says I shan't go. But I'll go now," and he ran to the stable, saddled his horse, and dashed away with Joe.

"Stop at my house," said Joe. "They'll make you one there. Over twenty women are making them there now. Let every boy wear his old coon-skin cap."

Two hours later over a dozen boys were riding off in every conceivable direction, notifying their comrades where to meet that night. When he had sent enough couriers out Jack hid Selim in a swamp and went out on foot to watch the redcoats. He saw them go to the houses of four different members of his command and ask for the boys. They plundered right and left and sometimes destroyed what they could not take away with them. At sunset they went into camp at the farmhouse of Eben Bagstock, a well-known patriot, and proceeded to kill one of his cows and two pigs for their supper. As soon as he saw that they had gone into camp for the night, he hurried away to meet the boys at Dudley's spring. It was four miles away, but he soon reached there. A dozen of the boys were there ahead of him, among them Sergeant Botts.

"How many are they, captain?" the sergeant asked.

"About thirty," as I could make out," he

replied. "We can kill the whole lot of 'em if as many of our boys come in."

"How can we do that?"

"Leave our horses behind and creep up near enough to get a shot at them."

"But they will have sentinels out," said the young sergeant.

"Yes, but not far enough from the camp to keep us out of range. I've seen them camping out that way. They think nobody is about who can do them any harm. But we'll show 'em what we can do."

The boys kept coming in till over eighty had arrived. The others lived so far out of the way that they could not be notified.

"We have enough," said Captain Jack. "Now listen to my plans, boys. We don't know anything about drills yet. Drills ain't worth much in the dark. We are to divide into four parties of twenty each. I will take two, Joe one, and Tom one. Joe and Tom's are to go together, and get round on the west side of the camp. I will take the others and get in on the north side. They will be lying down asleep. Twenty of my command will fire into them. The rest will spring up, making good targets for the rest of us. Then Joe's men will fire deliberately. Then mine again; then Tom's. By that time those who fired the first volley will be ready for another. Take good aim and make sure of your man. No matter what happens, obey the orders of your officer when you hear them. Do you all understand now?"

"Yes!" came from all of them.

"If there is one who doesn't quite understand, let him say so."

No one said a word.

"If there is any one who is afraid, let him step out and go back home."

Not one moved.

"All right. I am not afraid to face the king's troops with such brave spirits around me. You have all played soldier many a time. Now come on. We'll leave our horses here in Dudley's field till we come back," and he led off, followed by the others, as they had been divided.

It was a four-mile march, but they didn't mind that. It was all the better for them, as it gave them time to acquit themselves like men. When they came in sight of the campfire of the dragoons, Jack halted them and went forward to see if it was necessary for him to make any alteration in his plan. He found the dragoons asleep on the ground around the campfire, and a quartet of sentinels pacing up and down not over 100 feet from them. He went back to the boys and said:

"All is ready. I will give the order to fire first. Lieutenant, get your men in position on the west side at once."

They moved off in the darkness, guided by the smoldering light of the campfire. Ten minutes later Jack stood, rifle in hand, waiting a minute or two for his command to take good aim. Then he sang out in clear, ringing tones:

"Fire!"

His own rifle was the first to speak, and the sentinel at whom he aimed sank down to the ground. The volley of twenty rifles sent as many bullets into red targets on the ground around the fire. Instantly those who were not hit sprang to their feet and seized their arms like the well-

trained soldiers they were. But ere they could gather their wits about them, another volley from the west side sent a shower of bullets into them. Then, barely three seconds later, another from the north side struck them and nearly a score of them went down. They fired some scattering shots at the north side, guided only by the flashes from the rifles. Then came the fourth volley from Tom Miller's boys, and the destruction was such as to utterly demoralize the dragoons. They threw down their arms and cried out lustily:

"Quarter! Quarter!"

"I surrender!" cried the captain of the redcoats. "Don't fire! I surrender!"

"Hold up, Iron Grays!" shouted Jack, in manly tones. "The enemy surrenders!"

In spite of all he could do, the boys would yell. They cheered till they were hoarse, and the redcoats wondered why so many boyish voices were heard.

"Captain, order your men to stack their arms," said Jack to the redcoat officer.

He was promptly obeyed, and the arms were stacked near the campfire. Then they were marched back a little so as to be out of reach of their guns. Jack then marched his boys up so as to surround them.

"To whom have I the honor of surrendering my sword?" the captain of the dragoons asked, as Jack approached him.

"To me, Captain Jack Randolph, of the Iron Grays."

"Who are the Iron Grays?" the captain asked.

"They are the boys of the Rapidan. They have just organized, and this is their first service."

The captain was a picture to look at. He swore a great round oath, placed his sword under his foot and broke it, throwing the hilt away, saying:

"My career is ended. I am no longer a soldier!"

"I am very glad to hear it," said Jack. "That resolution may probably save your life if you stick to it."

"Don't add insult to misfortune. I would thank you to order your boys to fire on me again."

"I think it would give them great pleasure to do so," retorted Jack, "but I cannot afford to let 'em do it. We are not kingsmen and do not propose to imitate them."

The enraged officer wheeled and confronted Jack. He drew a pistol from his belt and clapped the muzzle of it to his head. But ere he could pull the trigger Jack sprang forward and clutched his arm. In another moment they were engaged in a desperate struggle in the glare of the campfire.

CHAPTER IV.—Captain Jack and His Prisoners.

The British officer was a muscular man, and much heavier than Jack. He would have gotten the better of him had not Joe Metcalf and Tom Miller interfered. They seized and held him.

"In God's name, shoot me!" he cried, as he glared at them. "I cannot survive this disgrace! Defeated and captured by a lot of boys!"

"You should rather be ashamed of the misdeeds of the king's men," said Jack. "You have robbed and insulted the defenseless women and children

of this section until we boys had to rise and chastise you."

"I've never done anything unworthy a soldier in my life," said the captain.

"That may be according to your standard. Our people tell stories of insults and wrongs till the very stones cry out for vengeance. Lieutenant Metcalf, detail a guard of thirty to mount these prisoners and take them to the commandant of the nearest post."

"Oh, the Lord be praised!" cried a voice in the darkness on the left. They looked in that direction, and the next moment Farmer Bagstock rushed up to where Jack was standing and began dancing like a lunatic. "Whoop! The Lord be praised! The rascals are caught! Half of 'em are killed or wounded! I was on my knees praying for vengeance on 'em when I heard the rifles! Glory, hallelujah!" and his dance was so very ludicrous that even some of the redcoats had to laugh at him.

"Mr. Bagstock, you forget that you are a member of the church," said Jack, trying to stop the happy old patriot's antics.

"Church or no church, I'll dance for joy! Whoop! Hooray for Washington and the Continental Congress!"

"Hooray! Hooray!" yelled all the boys, who couldn't resist the temptation to join him in his rejoicing.

"Down with the tyrant! Death to all redcoats!" yelled the old man. "Boys, come and camp on my place. As long as I have a beef or pig you can eat," and the overjoyed old patriot went round and shook hands with every boy in the command. He found one of them wounded in the arm—a youth of seventeen. He was the only one who was hurt on that night.

"Why didn't you tell me you were hurt, Dick?" Jack asked.

"It isn't much of a hurt, captain," replied the brave boy.

"It may be a very bad wound if it is not attended to."

"Yes," said Bagstock, "come to the house and let my wife dress it for you. She's as good as a doctor any time," and he led young Dick Ackerly up to the house.

"Captain, you may detail some of your men to look after your wounded," said Jack to the British officer. "We boys don't know much about such things. We know how to shoot, though."

The captain at once called to a number of his men to attend to their wounded comrades, and they went to work. The two lieutenants of dragoons were killed. The sergeant was very badly wounded, and over thirty were dead in all. Those of the prisoners who were not attending to the wounded were set to digging a trench in which to bury the dead. Just as the sun was peeping up at the tops of the tallest trees the last of the dead dragoons were buried. Jack then gave each of his boys a sword and belt, together with pistols and holsters, thus equipping them in everything that was lacking.

Ere the sun was an hour high Jack sent Lieutenant Metcalf off with the prisoners under a strong guard to deliver them to the commandant of the post some twenty miles away. The news spread like wildfire, and the farmers began to flock to Bagstock's place to see if the news were

true. They saw the arms and the horses of the dragoons and could doubt no longer. The father of young Sergeant Botts came up at a breakneck speed on his old mare. His face was white as a sheet. He feared that Harry was killed. But Harry was all right, and the old man was happy.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed. "Washington himself couldn't have done any better."

"No," said Squire Randolph. "Our boys know how to shoot as well as British soldiers do."

Martin, the suspected Tory, came over. He was dumfounded at what he heard and shook his head.

"The king's troops will come a thousand strong," he said, "and wreak a terrible vengeance."

"They may come a thousand strong," said Tom Miller, "but they won't go back so strong. We boys are in for it now. We have had a taste of blood and we are no longer boys. We are men now!"

Jack came up to Martin and extended his hand. The old man took it.

"How is Kittie?" he asked. "She was still insensible when I gave her to Jim."

"She is up and about, but she had a hard fall," replied the old man. "I want to thank you for bringing her home. She might have been trampled to death by the dragoons."

"What explanation does she give for the accident?"

"She says the lightning struck a tree near the roadside and frightened the horse so that he threw her. She struck on her head and can remember nothing more till she woke up in her room at home."

"It was a narrow escape, and I am glad she is no worse hurt."

"She told me to thank you ever so much for your kindness. Do you know what became of her horse?"

"Yes. Joe Metcalf caught him. He is at his place."

"Well, you boys have done me a good turn. I am sorry you have taken up arms, though, for the king's troops will now make us all feel the horrors of war."

"They will hardly bother their friends, though," returned Jack. "But we'll try to give them something to do if they pay us another visit."

The farmers kept coming in until there were so many present that provisions could not be had for them. Jack called out to the boys:

"Iron Grays, mount!"

Every boy sprang into a dragoon saddle and awaited further orders.

"March!"

They followed Jack, who made a dash for Dudley's spring. They found their iron grays all right and were soon in charge of them. The dragoons' horses were then distributed among those patriot farmers who had lost stock in the many raids the redcoats had made.

"Now for Miller's for a drill! Forward—gallop!" and they went thundering along the road like a whirlwind till they reached Miller's. There they found quite a number of very excited patriots and not a few Tories busily discussing the capture of Captain Lane's dragoons. When they saw Jack and his boys coming like an avalanche, about sixty strong, the patriots cheered till they

were hoarse. Jack dashed up to the store and asked:

"Is Sergeant Morris here?"

"Yes," said the old Continental soldier, coming forward. "Here I am, cap'n."

"Well, here we are, too," said Jack. "We are ready for drill."

"What in thunder do you want to drill for? Those redcoats you walloped last night were the best-drilled men in the world, but what good did it do 'em?"

"Very good, sergeant," returned Jack, laughing. "But we may meet them in the open field some day, and then the best drilled men would win. Come on out to the field now and let's have a day of it."

The old Continental went along with them, and for six long hours he put them through the drill. The boys and their horses were tired enough when they got through, but they went into camp, sleeping in a barn, with two lines of guards out all night. The next day they were at it again. The old sergeant was overjoyed at the aptitude of the boys.

"You will be old veterans in a week," he said to Jack.

"Of course. It makes every man feel as if he were sure of his comrades' co-operation. Discipline and confidence are everything in battle."

At noon on the second day Joe Metcalf and thirty of the boys returned, bearing a receipt from the patriot commandant of the post at Long Cove for the prisoners that had been brought in.

"The colonel was surprised," said Joe, "when I told him not one of Lane's dragoons had escaped. He asked me to tell him how the attack was made, and when I had done so, he said that a true military instinct had planned and guided the entire affair."

Jack blushed and said:

"Well, I am glad that we made no mistake."

"Yes, so am I. Colonel Rankin told me to give you his compliments and say that the British would try hard to wipe you out, and that you had better send out scouts in every direction for miles night and day, in order to get news of any movement of the enemy."

"Just what I am going to do," Jack said. "You and your boys must go through the drill."

CHAPTER V.—A Spy in Camp.

Jack Randolph lost no time in sending out scouts in every direction. He chose for that service those who had the best horses and were most familiar with the localities to be watched.

"The moment you see the enemy," he said, in his instructions to them, "make sure of the direction he is going, and then fly to headquarters here, at Miller's grove. If we are not here, one will be left to tell you where we have gone."

They then rode away, and Jack then went on with the drilling of his men. Scores of farmers and their wives and daughters came to see them drill. Somehow the exploit of the capture of the terrible dragoons had given Jack and his boys a wonderful name along the Rappahannock. Even stanch old patriots had laughed at the idea of the boys playing soldier. But now they looked upon Cap-

tain Jack as a wonder. They wanted to see him and the Iron Grays, and so they came in such numbers that Miller, the patriot storekeeper, reaped a harvest of Continental money from them.

Jack gave the boys an hour to rest and feed their horses, and no sooner had the drill ceased than a young girl on a splendid iron gray horse dashed across the field straight to his side. It was Kittie Martin, daughter of the old Tory.

"Oh, Captain Jack!" she cried, as she dashed up to his side and extended her hand. "I have come all the way from home to thank you for what you did the other day. It was just like the brave fellow you are. I won't forget the service."

"Miss Kittie, I was never so glad of anything in my life than of what I did that afternoon," he replied. "Your horse came bounding by Joe and I without you. I knew something had happened and went back after you. I am glad you are able to be out again."

"Thanks. But for you I might have been dead. Do you know that everybody in the county now calls you a hero?"

"No, I didn't know that," he replied. "But I hope I may deserve that name some day."

"So do I. You deserve it now. Now, Jack, listen to me. You saved my life. I want to show you that I know how to appreciate it. You won't betray me?"

"Betray you? No! What do you mean?"

"I mean this: My father, as you already know or suspect, is a kingsman."

"Yes."

"Well, a man in plain country farmer's garb came to our house last night. He and father have had a secret conference, and he came on here this morning to see you and the boys drill. He is a spy, I am sure. You will know him by the brown slouch hat he wears. He is somewhere in the crowd now. You won't let it be known where you got the hint, will you?"

"No, Kittie, and I would die under the gibbet rather than betray you. Are you a friend to the cause of the Continental Congress?"

"Yes. I would like to see the king's soldiers driven out of the country."

"You don't know how glad I am to hear you say that," he said in a low tone. "If you help us we will try to protect your home when the king's troops have been driven out. I'll go and see if I can find that fellow under the brown hat," and he rode back to the place where nearly a hundred or more people were standing looking on. She rode by his side, and when they reached the crowd a cheer went up that caused Jack to raise his hat and bow.

It did not take him long to spot the man Kittie had told him about. He made sure of his description, and then went and detailed two of the boys to shadow him till he started to go away. Then they were to arrest him. If he resisted he was to be shot on the spot. When the hour for dinner had passed the bugle recalled them to drill again. All except the two who had been detailed responded promptly. The spy was seen counting the Iron Grays as well as making several other observations. He even made a diagram of the camp and the old barn in which the boys slept. When the crowd began to thin out late in the afternoon, the spy, of whom no one seemed to have taken any

notice, prepared to go. It was then that the two boys stepped up, and leveling the rifles at him, ordered him to surrender.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"That's what we want to find out," replied Benny Graham. "We have seen you counting the Iron Grays and doing other things that a spy would naturally do, so we want you to explain to the captain."

"I can do that easily enough. Just lower your guns. They might go off and that would be bad for me."

"We'll do that when you have been searched, disarmed and secured," was the reply.

Several farmers crowded around and wanted to know what the trouble was, when Benny sternly ordered them to stand back out of the way. Lieutenant Miller rode up, and when he heard what it was about placed the man under guard. He searched him and found a diagram of the camp and barn on him. The man turned pale at that and said:

"You boys are making fools of yourselves. That is a plan of a barn I am building on my place in Hanover."

"It is very strange that you should come here to draw the plan of your barn in Hanover," said Tom. "But stranger things have happened, and you may be all right. I hope you may prove to be a good friend of the cause instead of a spy for the enemy."

"I am a friend of the cause and am not a spy. I came this way on my return home, and stopped to see what had drawn a crowd of people here."

"Does any one here know you?" Tom asked.

"Yes, Mr. Martin, a farmer two miles from here, knows me well. He can tell you that I am a citizen of Hanover, and that I am a friend of Washington."

Tom turned to some of the boys and asked:

"Is Mr. Martin about here to-day?"

"No," said one. "But Jim and his sister were here."

"See if Jim is still here."

Two of them went in search of Jim and found him preparing to go home. Kittie had already gone.

"Jim," said one of them, "Tom Miller wants to see you. We have arrested a man who says your father knows all about him. Tom wants you to tell what you know about him."

"Well, I don't know anything about him. Tell Tom Miller if he wants to see me to come to me."

"You forget that these are war times, Jim," said one of the boys, "and that when you are sent for you have to go. Lieutenant Miller sent us for you."

"Tell Lieutenant Miller to go to grass. I am going home," and he sprang into the saddle as if to show that he meant what he said.

One seized the bit and the other leveled his rifle at him.

"Get down now and come along or you'll find yourself a dead fool!" said the boy with the rifle.

Jim turned pale, for it began to look blue for him.

"Do you mean to arrest me?" he asked.

"Yes, and you are going to Lieutenant Miller dead if you don't go alive."

"Well, I suppose I can't help myself. You fellows are the biggest set of fools in the county."

"Maybe we are, but we are having things our own way, though," was the retort.

They took him to where Tom was and told him what he had said. Tom was shrewd enough not to let the prisoner hear the questions he put to Jim.

"Do you know that man, Jim?" he asked.

"Yes. His name is Morris, and he lives up the river."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Yes."

Jim didn't know that the man had said he came from Hanover. He had used the common expression "up the river" in the hope that it would be definite enough to let him out, however indefinite it might be.

"When did you see him last?"

"I met him here this morning."

"Had you seen him before recently?"

"No, not in months."

"Gosh!" exclaimed a farmer, who was standing near by, "I saw him at your house last night as I rode by."

Jim looked confused for a moment and then said:

"You must be mistaken. He was not at our house at all."

"But I ain't mistaken, not by a jugful. I saw him and your father talking on the steps as I rode by."

"It was another man you saw," said Jim.

Tom went to the prisoner and asked:

"Did you stop at Martin's last night?"

"Yes," he replied, thinking it useless to deny. "Martin is an old friend of mine."

Tom then went back to Jim and said:

"Jim, I shall have to put you under arrest. He says he was at your house last night."

CHAPTER VI.—Kittie Saves the Iron Grays.

Young Martin was a brave and very reckless youth. He was as strong as the average man, and as active as a panther. When he heard Tom Miller say that he was under arrest his eyes blazed.

"I am not going to be arrested by you boys!" he said. "I am going to go home, and the first one touches me will get hurt," said Jim very quietly.

"If you make any resistance you will be the one who is hurt."

Jim started, but in another moment he was seized by at least a half dozen of the Iron Grays. They held him till he was bound securely. They were too many for him.

"Jim, you are going to get yourself into trouble, I fear," said Miller, who had a very cool way about him. "We know that you are a king's man, but if you have been aiding a spy you will be dealt with severely."

"I have done nothing of the kind," said Jim in a sullen tone.

"Well, I hope you have not, but you have done some tall lying about it, which makes it look quite suspicious, to say the least."

Jim said no more and both he and the spy were placed under a strong guard. The farmers gradually cleared out and the camp at sunset was once more quiet. But one of the farmers, who had to go by Martin's place on his way home, stopped and told him of the arrest of his son and the stranger.

"Good Lord!" gasped Martin. "What did they arrest 'em for?"

"They think the stranger is a spy, and because Jim had lied about the matter they arrested him, too."

"S'pose he did lie!" exclaimed the old man. "All boys do more or less lying, but they don't get arrested for it. I'm going to see about this thing," and he at once began to prepare to go to Miller's store to see Captain Jack.

Mrs. Martin was almost prostrated by the news and Kittie was dumfounded. She never dreamed that her part in the affair was going to work injury to her brother.

"Father," she said to her parent, as he began pulling on his boots, "let me go and attend to this!"

"What! You? A girl going on such a mission at night? No, I'll see about it myself."

"Now listen to me, father," she pleaded. "These are war times and the people are excited. You are suspected of being loyal to the king, and it will take but little provocation to make them arrest you, too. Jack Randolph is all powerful just now. He and I are good friends. He will not refuse me anything. Just wait till to-morrow morning and I will go and see Jack. If you go to-night, blustering and talking hard about the boys, you will get locked up, too."

"William, Kittie is right," said Mrs. Martin. "Let her manage it. She knows how to work Jack. He won't be harsh with her, but he would with you. He is nothing but a boy, but he has one hundred boys at his back with guns in their hands, and so you can't help yourself."

"Yes, yes, that is true," said the old man. "Lord, what are we coming to when even boys take up arms and defy the king's troops?"

"The king has brought it all on himself," said Kittie. "He has not treated the people right, and——"

"Are you going to turn rebel and talk treason, too?" he further demanded, turning upon her.

"No. The king is hurried like the rest of us, and it is very foolish for people to say the king can do no wrong. People don't rebel and fight without a cause."

"Do you justify this wicked rebellion?" demanded her father.

"No, nor do I denounce it. I do not justify the acts of the king, either. His wickedness will cause England to lose her American colonies."

"Well, you talk about as much like a rebel as any I ever heard," said her father, very much surprised.

"Well, you know I am not a rebel, father," she replied. "It is our privilege to speak what we think in the privacy of our homes, and I have done so. All our neighbors are rebels, and if you hope to escape their vengeance you must at least not do anything to excite it. If that man is a spy, and I suspect that he is, you must let him alone and not excite the wrath of the whigs."

If they prove that he is a spy they may shoot him, and then our own home may be burnt over our heads. Keep quiet, let drop a word of praise for Washington now and then, and we won't lose anything by it."

Mrs. Martin backed Kittie in her argument for prudence, and the old loyalist had to submit. He didn't go to the camp that night. On the contrary, he went to bed early to sleep over the trouble that had come upon him so suddenly. As for Kittie, she cried herself to sleep. She blamed herself for the arrest of her brother. She never dreamed that he would get mixed up with the stranger, and she made up her mind to go to Jack Randolph the next day and make him release Jim from the arrest. She had not gone to sleep at midnight, hence she heard the noise of a troop of horse in front of the house at that hour, and also heard a knock on the front door. Kittie was fearless in some things, and somehow she decided to see what the intrusion meant. Ere her father could get to the door she was there and saw a troop of dragoons in the starlight. She heard her father coming, and deftly stepped aside so she would be behind the door when it should be opened. He opened the door and an officer asked:

"Are you Mr. Martin?"

"Yes, that's my name."

"I was told that I would find Morris here, or a message from him. Is he here?"

"No. He was to have been here to-night, but he was arrested late to-day at Miller's store as a spy."

"Who arrested him?"

"Those boy rebels who have been making so much trouble for the last week."

"The same band that captured Lane's dragoons?"

"Yes."

"Where are they now?"

"At Miller's. They are sleeping in the big barn this side of the store."

"Very good. How many are they?"

"About ninety or one hundred, I believe."

"Well, there won't be so many of them after daylight," and he turned and went back to the dragoons in the road in front of the house.

Mr. Martin went back to bed and Kittie slipped out through the back door, hurried to the stable, led out her own iron gray, hastily placed a bridle on him, sprang upon his bare back and rode away through a little path and road toward Miller's. She knew every inch of the way and so did her horse. It was a half mile nearer to Miller's than by the main road. It would bring her out near the big barn where the Iron Grays were slumbering.

"Halt there!" cried a sentinel in the darkness ahead of her.

She reined up her horse instantly, and asked:

"Are you one of the Iron Grays?"

"Yes."

"Then, if you value the lives of yourself and comrades, lead Captain Randolph to me at once!"

The sentinel called the corporal of the guard. He came, and he said the same to him, adding:

"Don't breathe a word to any one that a woman brought any word."

Two minutes later Jack was by her side. She leaned down and whispered:

"A troop of dragoons have just left my father's place to surprise you. They are coming down the main road. I came the back way. For my sake save my brother from harm. I have done this for your sake."

"Your brother is safe, Kittie. You have saved us, but I can't understand why our scouts have not reported them."

"Nor I, either, but I saw and heard them myself. I'll go back now."

Jack caught her trembling hand and pressed it to his lips. In another moment she was gone.

"She is a brave girl and as true as steel," he said. Then he turned and went back into the barn.

Two minutes later every boy was up, rifle in hand, waiting for orders.

"The enemy is coming to give us a trouncing," said Jack in a tone just loud enough for all of them to hear him. "Follow me and we'll show him that we are not to be caught napping."

He led the way out of the barn and over a fence into a field. Thence he double-quickened it alongside the fence nearly a half mile. There he halted and ranged them alongside the fence.

"They will come down this way," he said, "and when I give the word to fire every one of you make sure of your man. Then draw your pistols and finish any that may be left alive. Hark! They are coming! Be ready now!"

A few minutes later the dragoons rode slowly down the road, intending to halt and dismount for the purpose of surrounding the barn on foot. The Iron Grays held their breaths till Jack's clear voice was heard giving the order to fire. The volley was horribly destructive. Half a hundred men stumbled out of their saddles into the dust, and were ruthlessly trampled on by those behind them.

"Steady, Iron Grays!" sung out Jack. "Let none escape! Kill the redcoats!"

Then the pistols began to talk, and demoralized dragoons fell here and there, as they madly strove to get out of harm's way.

"Rally and scale the fence!" cried the British officer. "They are nothing but boys! Kill the young rebels! Charge!"

But scarcely a score of men obeyed him. The surprise and the terrible destructiveness of the first volley had taken all the heart out of them. The officer led the charge against the fence right where Jack was standing. He reached over from his saddle and made a savage cut at the young captain. Jack caught his arm at the wrist and jerked him out of his saddle, whereupon a desperate encounter ensued.

CHAPTER VII.—The Old Tory and the Spy.

The dragoons rallied to the rescue of their captain, but ere they could render him any assistance he was jerked to the ground from the top of the fence. The fall broke his arm and he lay on the ground almost unconscious from pain. The boys kept up such an incessant popping with their pistols that the remnant of the dragoons put

spurs to their horses and fled back where they came. Kittie Martin was in her room at home when she heard the defeated dragoons speeding by. Her father sprang out of bed and listened. He heard them yelling and swearing, and came to the conclusion that the Iron Grays had again triumphed, and that his son and the man Morris were still in very great danger. Two of the dragoons stopped in front of the house and called out:

"Water! Give us water! We are wounded."

Martin threw open the door and said:

"Yes, I'll bring you water in a moment!" and then he seized the water pail and ran to the well in the rear yard. Kittie hastily threw on a dress and ran downstairs to the door.

"What in the world has happened?" she asked.

"We have been ambushed and cut to pieces," replied the wounded man.

"By whom?" she asked.

"The rebels, of course."

"Can't I do something—bind up your wounds?" she asked.

"No. I don't care to be captured. The whole rebel army is coming this way."

"Here's cold water," said Martin, coming around the house with the pail fresh from the well. He set the pail on the ground and handed up a gourd full to each of them.

"I thank you, sir," said the dragoon. "I wish I could stop to have my wound dressed, but I dare not."

"I am sorry. How did the thing happen?" old Martin asked.

"They had news of our coming, I suspect," replied the dragoon, "and ambushed us this side of Miller's in the lane between the two fields. I saw Captain Edwards fall. Oh, it has been a terrible thing for us. One more drink of water and we'll go."

They drank again and then rode off, leaving the father and daughter standing there in front of the house.

"It is awful," said the old loyalist, shaking his head.

"Yes," said Kittie, "so it is, but somehow I am glad it was not those brave boys who were cut to pieces. They are our neighbors, father."

"Yes, but rebels, though," said the old man.

"That may be. They are our neighbors, and the king lives three thousand miles away."

"Come into the house and stop talking treason to the king," said her father, leading the way with the pail of water.

Mrs. Martin was up and had heard what the dragoon said.

"So the king's troops have been beaten again, and by boys?" she said.

"Yes," said her husband. "It looks as if heaven itself was against the king."

"Yes. I hope our boy has not been hurt."

"Oh, I am sure he has not," put in Kittie. "He is a prisoner, and prisoners don't have any fighting to do. I'll ride over there just as soon as I get my breakfast. I am sure Jack won't refuse me when I ask him to let brother come home with me."

"Tut, tut, child," said her father. "You overrate your influence with him. That boy's head

has been turned by the commission Washington gave him."

"Well, we'll see," and she went upstairs to her room, well satisfied with what she had done.

"Jack cannot refuse me now," she said to herself, as she ensconced herself once more in bed. "He is a brave fellow and a hero. I am glad I saved his life. I think him the bravest boy that ever lived," and she went to sleep to dream of him.

When the dragoons fled the road in front of where the Iron Grays had posted themselves was covered with dead or dying men and horses. Only two of the boys had been hurt. One of them got a saber cut on the head, the other on the arm. They set up a wild cheer as the enemy fled.

"Now load your rifles again!" cried Jack, "and be ready for any emergency. Lieutenant Miller, take twenty men and gather up all the arms in the road over there. Lieutenant Metcalf, take twenty men and look after the wounded. Sergeant Botts, send Corporal James and a file of soldiers to the camp for picks and spades to dig a trench for the dead."

Every order was promptly obeyed, and in a few moments the work was going on as ordered. Jack then sent out scouts a couple of miles up the road to see that the enemy did not rally and come down on them unawares.

"Captain, my arm is broken," said the British officer, with a groan, as he sat up on the ground. "Have you a surgeon in your command who can come to me?"

"No, captain, I am sorry to say," said Jack. "There is a country doctor who lives two miles from here. I'll send a man for him at once."

"Thanks. You are kind. I am in very great pain."

"I am sorry you are hurt. If you wish I'll take you to the house of Mrs. Miller, who is an excellent woman, and give you a bed."

"I should feel very grateful to you if you would," he said.

"Then come with me; lean on me with your other arm," and Jack caught him around the waist and supported him all the way down the road to Miller's house.

The officer was in great pain, but he said to Jack:

"You are the favorite of fortune. You have twice defeated the dragoons and with great slaughter. I am sorry such a young man is in arms against the king."

"I am fighting for my country," replied Jack. "We don't want the king. We have had enough of him."

"Still he is the lawful king."

"Yes, but we are going to get rid of him and have control of our own country. If England wants him to reign over her all right. We don't want him and won't have him. Here we are. Mrs. Miller and all her family are up, knowing that somebody has been hurt."

They found the household ready to receive the wounded. But Mrs. Miller was astonished at seeing Captain Edwards brought a prisoner and wounded. Three months before he passed there at the head of his bold riders and plundered them of nearly everything they had.

"I am a prisoner, madam," he said, "and crave the hospitality of your house."

"You are welcome, captain," she replied. "I am sorry you are hurt. But it is the fortune of war."

"Yes, and my misfortune."

"I have sent for Dr. McCurdy, Mrs. Miller," said Captain Jack, "and hope he will soon be here to attend to Captain Edwards' wound. Can you give him a bed?"

"Yes; this way—in this room," and she led the way with a candle and Jack attended to undressing the captain after the lady left the room.

By the light of the tallow candle the wounded Briton scrutinized the face of the young commander of the Iron Grays, and said:

"I hope we shall meet again when we can shake hands as friends, Captain Randolph."

"I heartily reciprocate your wish, captain," replied Jack, "and now, if you will excuse me, I will return to my brave fellows and see that nothing goes wrong," and with that he bowed himself out of the room.

When Jack got back he found Kittie Martin waiting for him. She interceded for her brother's return to their home. Jack hesitated for an instant, and then said:

"Kittie, I can't refuse you your request. I will go and get Jim and you shall take him home with you." This Jack did, and Kittie thanked him from the bottom of her heart for allowing Jim his liberty.

Two days later all the wounded dragoons were sent to the patriot commander of the post. But it happened that while the prisoners were en route to post they were attacked by a large party of British soldiers, and a battle was fought, in the midst of which the Iron Grays was reinforced by a party of Continental troops, and the redcoats were put to route, and the wounded and also such prisoners as they had taken resumed their way to patriot headquarters. Several of the Iron Grays had been killed.

When Jack and his boys reached their camp again Kittie Martin came to see him, and asked if her brother had been killed.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Indian Maiden's Arrow.

To say that Jack was surprised at the words of the young girl would be but a mild way of putting it. What did she mean by asking if her brother was killed? Was he in the fight? Which side was he on? These queries flashed through his brain in an instant.

"Tell me, Jack Randolph!" she exclaimed. "Is my brother dead? Was he killed in battle?" and as she put the question to him she led him away from the crowd as far as she could.

"Was he in the battle, Kittie?" he finally asked.

"Oh, I don't know! I don't know!" she cried. "I could do nothing with him. He went away with Major Bayne's command at midnight, saying he would fight for the king. Major Bayne was defeated, and the dead are everywhere around. Oh, I dare not look for him among the dead for fear I may find him!" and she wrung her hands in an agony of suspense.

It was Major Bayne's command which had attacked the wagon train of prisoners and been defeated.

"Kittie, this is no place for you," said Jack to her, in his tenderest tone. "You are all unstrung. Go over to Mr. Miller's wagon there, and I will send some one to look among the dead. If he is found I will let you know. If he is not I will bring you word myself."

The dead had been buried on the field, except the Iron Grays. They were taken home by their friends for burial in the old family plots.

"Miss Kittie," said Tom Miller to the sister of Jim Martin, "we can't find him among either the dead or wounded."

"Thank God for that!" and she burst into tears.

"I am sorry to hear that he has decided to fight for the king," Tom said.

"Yes. It really breaks my heart," she said. "But he would go in spite of all my pleading. He seems to think the king's cause will win, and that all the whigs will be punished. Oh, I do want Washington to win and drive all the king's troops out of the country."

"Ah! You are with us, then?"

"Does Jack know your sentiments, Miss Kittie?"

"Yes, as well as I do myself."

Just then the bugle sounded for the Iron Grays to mount, and in a few minutes they were all in the saddle—about fifty of them—forty less than when they left Miller's the day before to escort the wounded prisoners to Long Cave. Jack rode up to where Kittie was standing by the Miller wagon and said:

"You are going back home now?"

"Yes."

"Then come with us. We will give you an escort to be proud of."

His face was aglow, and Jack dismounted to walk with her to her horse. He assisted her into the saddle, and then remounted and rode by her side. When he reached the Iron Grays again he gave the order to march, and the gallant little band moved off, followed by the cheers of the old Continentals as long as they could be heard.

"Come on, Kittie," said Jack, "let's get on ahead of them a little ways. We have no more red-coats in this part of the country now," and the two urged their horses forward to a brisk trot, till they were at least a half mile ahead of the command.

Then he turned to her and asked:

"Does your father know that you are a whig?"

"He has called me a rebel several times when I would say something in favor of the whigs or in praise of Washington."

"What does he say to that?"

"He does not say much. When I brought brother home yesterday he was very much surprised, and said he had no idea I could have done it."

"No, and it is well that he does not, perhaps. But you have a task before you, Kittie, of which you little dream."

"What is that?"

"That of saving your father from the vengeance of our friends. The enemy will send a large force here some day soon to punish us for the events of the past week. They will burn and

destroy so much property that the whigs will retaliate by burning down the homes of the king-men."

She turned pale at the bare thought of such a calamity, and exclaimed:

"Oh, what shall I do?" and she wrung her hands. "Was ever a poor girl so placed before?"

"Tell your father to do nothing to provoke the wrath of the patriots. That is the only way to avert it if that sort of thing begins here. If I find that they mean to retaliate on him I will try to avert it by telling our friends how you rode through the woods at night and saved the lives of the Iron Grays."

"Even then my father would hardly find it in his heart to forgive me, for he hates this rebellion as he never hated anything before in his life. He has said that if I married a rebel he would disown me and cut me off without a shilling."

"I had no idea he was so bitter as all that," said Jack, very much surprised at what she said.

"He has been prudent enough to keep quiet about it. But I fear that if a large force should come here and hold the country along the Rappahannock for a while, he would let his discretion go to the winds. He says it is absurd for the colonies to think of whipping England."

"Well, we have done very well at that business lately," said Jack, smiling. "Why all our swords and pistols came from her best soldiers captured in battle. Look at the etching on that blade," and he drew his sword from its scabbard and held it before her eyes.

"Ugh!" she exclaimed, with a shudder, "there's blood on it!"

"Yes. I cut down two dragoons with it this morning. It is——"

He felt the weapon almost knocked from his hand, a sharp ring of steel and flint in collision, and an India arrow fell to the ground. Both horses shied a little, and as he checked up his steed Jack saw the form of an Indian girl disappearing in the bushes by the roadside.

"That arrow was aimed at you, Kittie!" cried he, putting spurs to his horse and dashing into the bushes.

He would have ridden over the dusky maid of the forest had she not been protected by a tree, behind which she stood in dignified silence, a bow in her hand and a quiver full of arrows at her back.

"Winona!" he exclaimed on recognizing the Indian maiden. "Did you send that arrow at the heart of the white maiden?"

"Winona will slay the palefaced maiden who would take from her the heart of the White Eagle."

"She has not taken his heart, and if Winona harms her in the least White Eagle will hate her forever more. She is the friend of his sister and White Eagle will not let her be harmed. He has spoken," and with that he turned his horse's head and rode back to the road.

CHAPTER IX.—The Shot from a Coward.

He found Kittie Martin pale as death. She had heard what passed between him and the Indian maiden. Her manner was cold and reserved.

"It was an Indian girl," he said, as he reached her side.

"Yes. I know her—Winona, the daughter of old Chief Red Panther. I did not know that she had any claim on you."

"She has none whatever."

"I heard what she said," was the reply.

"Did you never hear that I had once saved her life from a panther?"

She turned quickly and said:

"Yes. I had forgotten it, though."

She looked at him again and her icy manner began to thaw out.

"You have never made love to her, then?" she asked.

"Never. I could not do such a thing," he replied.

"Well, I am surprised that she should have done such a thing as to exhibit a jealous feeling when in your presence."

"Indians are not given to concealing their likes and dislikes. If they like you they don't hesitate to let you know it, though they are not demonstrative."

The rapid galloping of a horse up the road in front of them gave both a sudden start, and the next moment the familiar figure of one of the Iron Grays dashed around the bend in the road and almost ran into them.

"Halt!" cried Jack.

The big gray horse was checked up so suddenly as to almost throw him on his haunches. The next instant the youthful rider saluted and exclaimed:

"Oh, is it you, captain?"

"Yes. What news, Dick?"

"A force of redcoats and Tories are coming up along the right bank of the river, and they are killing and burning right and left."

"How did you hear that?"

"A man came up to Miller's an hour ago for help, and I was sent to tell you about it," and then Dick Manson raised his hat to Kittie, who bowed and smiled in return.

"Well, go back to Miller's and tell them that we are all coming. We have had an awful battle with the dragoons, and whipped them out of their boots."

The youth turned his horse's head and rode away at full speed again, leaving Jack and the young girl to follow more at their leisure.

"How well he obeys you," said Kittie, as she gazed after the youth.

"The first duty of a soldier is to obey orders," remarked Jack.

"Yes, I've heard officers say that a number of times. But it is so hard to obey every order given. Sometimes one wants to have his own way."

"Yes, but in time of war everybody seems to think that one man should conduct affairs and everybody else must carry out his orders. We all look to Washington to drive out the redcoats. He says he'll do it if the people will stand by him through thick and thin. That's the way it goes. We all believe in him. Why, when the boys here heard that he had made me captain they grew wild in enthusiasm for the cause. They all wanted to join me. Before that I couldn't have raised twenty for active service."

"Jack, you are a real hero. I am proud to be your friend," and she gave him a glance of undisguised admiration.

"Kittie, I'd rather hear that from your lips than from any one else in all the world," and his flushed face attested the truth of his words.

"Why, do you care so much for my opinion, Jack?"

"Yes, Kittie, I do. I think——"

Crack!

A rifle bullet whizzed so close to Jack's head as to cut a hole in his hat. It came from the woods on the right of the road. He coolly took off his hat and stuck his finger through the hole made by the bullet, saying:

"That fellow intended to send that bullet through my head. It was a close shave."

"Why, did a bullet do that just then?"

"Yes," and he looked toward the woods again as if half inclined to make a rush to find the would-be murderer.

But he knew how utterly futile all such efforts were if the party tried to escape. He was on horseback, and to dismount and leave Kitty in the road would leave her a prey to much anxiety and worry.

They rode on and soon reached Miller's, where the people who had come up from below were very much excited. The redcoats and Tories were burning the homes of the whigs, and in two instances had hanged men for resisting them.

"We will go down there and see about that," said Jack. "But you must go along, too, and do some fighting. We boys can't whip all creation."

"Well, it looks as though you were doing pretty well, anyway," said Miller, who was overjoyed at the defeat of Major Bayne's command.

"We can't muster over 70 now," said Jack. "We want more men or boys."

"You can get more. There's 40 boys on the way here now from over the river," said an old farmer who had just come in. "I'm a grandfather and fought the Indians on the James forty years ago. I ain't too old to fight now, and I'm going with you boys to see you through."

CHAPTER X.—The Old Tory's Fierce Denunciation.

Old Ben Worly's word electrified the boys, and in ten minutes over thirty other men had volunteered to go along with Jack down the river.

"Lieutenant Miller will take charge of the camp till I come back," said the young captain. Then he turned to Kitty and whispered:

"I'll see you home now if you wish to go."

"Oh, thank you," she said. "I didn't expect you to do that, Jack," and they rode off together, followed by the eyes of more than one young maiden who felt a tinge of jealousy tugging at her heart.

They rode quite fast and in a little while reached her home. Mrs. Martin was very much astonished at seeing Jack come home with Kittie.

"Oh, mother!" cried Kittie. "Brother was not in the fight, or if he was he was not hurt, for we hunted among the dead and wounded for him."

The mother's anxious face became relaxed and tears filled her eyes.

"I am glad of that," she said.

Mr. Martain himself came in and was quite astonished at seeing Jack there. Kittie ran up to him, threw her arms around his neck and told him that Jim was safe.

"Yes, he was not among the killed or wounded," said Jack, "and I hope he never will be, either, Mr. Martin."

"So do I, my boy," said the old man. "He is the only son I have, and to lose him would kill me."

"In God's name, why don't you keep him from calling down the wrath of his neighbors on his head, then? If he goes into the king's service he will never be permitted to live here again. Tories and troopers are now burning the homes of the whigs down the river. By and by the whigs will retaliate and your beautiful home here will go up in smoke. Why don't you side with your neighbors and——"

"Young man," said old Martin sternly, "before I would turn traitor to my king I would put the torch to all I have and go forth a wanderer on the face of the earth!"

Jack looked at him in dumfounded amazement. It was the first time he had dared proclaim his sentiments outside his own family.

"If you want to bring your young rebels here and burn and hang, do so, and the sooner you do it the better."

"On the contrary, Mr. Martin," said Jack, "I want to save you from such a fate. You have as much right to your opinions as I have to mine. But in time of war prudence is wisdom. You can save yourself and property by simply not doing anything against your neighbors. You harbored a spy the other night. Were that fact known nothing could save you from the fury of your neighbors. The secret is held by me, and I am not going to let it get away from me. But I must insist that you do no more of that sort of thing against our common country."

Old Bill Martin's face was a sight to look at when Jack had finished speaking. His wrath at being thus talked to by a beardless youth came near choking him. Suddenly he burst forth in fierce invective. He denounced Washington and the Continental Congress as traitors who should all be hanged.

"Leave my house, you young rebel whelp!" he hissed. "You dare to come here and dictate to me what I shall or shall not do!"

"Father, father!" cried Kittie in great alarm. "He saved brother's life and my own. Have you no gratitude?"

"That gives him no right to come here and dictate to me. Leave my house, Jack Randolph, before I kick you out like a dog."

Kittie wheeled from her father and, turning to Jack, said:

"You will forgive him for my sake?"

"Yes, for your sake, Kittie," and he held her hand in his a moment and repeated "for your sake" again, and then turned and left the house.

He sprang into the saddle and rode away. His face was flushed at being called a rebel whelp.

"But for her sake I'd have run him through the

body," he said to himself as he dashed along the road toward the camp of the Iron Grays.

"Halt!" came a sharp cry, and looking up he found two men in the middle of the road with rifles leveled at his breast. To his horror one of them was Jim Martin. The other was one whom he did not know.

"Well?" he said.

"You are my prisoner, Jack Randolph," said Jim. "Dismount and come along with us."

Jack was quick to catch his opportunities.

"Well, I suppose I can't help myself," he replied, and he turned his horse slightly to dismount, getting the horse between him and his would-be captors.

No sooner had his feet touched the ground than he drew a pistol, slipped around and fired at the stranger, the bullet going through his neck. Then, quick as a flash, he sprang at Jim, who tried to fire his rifle, and struck him with the empty weapon. The rifle was discharged just as the pistol landed on his head, and Jim went down with a thousand stars flashing before his eyes. Jack disarmed him and then remounted his horse and rode away.

"I'd kill him if I stopped there one minute longer," he said to himself, as he urged his horse to a fast pace. "I don't want his blood on my hands. His sister is a patriot and true blue, and for her sake I spared his life. He did not join the king's army. He is hanging around here in the woods trying to kill me. I have spared his life, but some day he'll be found hanging to a tree and nobody will ever know who did it."

He reached camp and found that the boys over the Rapidan had arrived, forty strong, all in gray uniforms and mounted on iron gray horses. They had been drilled, too, to some extent. They received him with cheers, for they already looked upon him as a hero, under whom they would be proud to fight. His force now numbered 110 boys. About 50 old farmers agreed to go with them down the river to meet the British and Tories who were burning and killing like so many Indians.

During the afternoon and evening refugees from down the river continued to arrive, each bringing tales of horror enough to curdle one's blood. When night came a red glare in the sky down the river told of the burning of homes and barns by the ruthless invaders. The last messenger who came said that the force was coming up the river to meet that of Major Bayne's, which started the day before from the river up country.

"Major Bayne will not keep the engagement," said Captain Jack. "I'll keep it for him."

Early the next day he started out with a force of 160 rifles. By noon they found out they were within five miles of the enemy, who were encamped at Fly's spring near a little country church. They were about 250 strong, one-half of them Tories, mostly from the lower counties. Jack halted and sent out his own scout. They came back a little before dark and said they were encamped near the spring and were tearing the little old church down for dry firewood for their campfires.

"They have captured Mr. Walters, member of the Continental Congress," added the scout, "and

say they are going to send him to England to be tried for treason. They have hanged Ben Parker and burned down his house and barns."

"Who told you all that?" the young captain asked.

"An old negro woman. She saw the hanging. She saved the little child of the Parkers, and has her in her cabin now."

"Well, maybe she'll see some more hanging if she lives a few hours longer."

He at once resumed the march, and soon came in sight of the campfires of the enemy. Then he dismounted his men and surrounded the camp on two sides, the west and north sides. At the word 150 rifles belched forth a shower of death that was appalling.

"Surrender or you'll all be killed!" cried Jack.

In the confusion that ensued the officers delayed making a reply, and another volley was given to enforce the demand. Then they started to run, when the party on the west side gave them another volley. They threw down their arms and cried:

"Quarter! Quarter! We surrender!"

Jack immediately surrounded the camp then and made them give up their arms. When they were all disarmed he placed them under a strong guard. Major Burke was in command, and when he tendered his sword, Jack refused to receive it.

"I won't receive your surrender," he said, "till I know whether or not you ordered the hanging of Mr. Parker."

"I did give the order, and would do so again," was the haughty reply.

"Well, I'll give a similar order in your case. Lieutenant Metcalf, see that Major Burke is hanged to that limb up there within ten minutes."

"I am a prisoner of war," said the major. "He was not. He was an outlaw."

"This is the law of retaliation. String him up, Iron Grays, and down with the king!"

The major suffered the penalty, Jack walking away until the affair was over.

One day there was reported that old Jim Martin was harboring a mysterious man, thought to be a British spy. Jack took five of the Iron Grays and started towards Martin's place. While on the road, and after dark, they espied Martin and his son with another man just coming from the Martin house. Jack and his comrades waited until the trio were near them and then made them prisoners.

Old man Martin was furious. Jack now spoke up and said:

"Mr. Martin, I am going to send you to General Washington to protect yourself. Jim, I am going to send you to Long Cave with Colonel Maxwell. If you stay here the boys cannot protect you from being hung up. If I can manage to get you and your father locked up until peace is declared I can save your home."

Then Jack gave the orders and the prisoners were marched away. Jack sent word to Martin's home what had become of father and son, and said he would look after the mother and daughter.

Next day Jack went to the Martin place and saw Kittie and her mother. Mrs. Martin was very angry with Jack for what he had done, and it was some time before Jack could explain that

all was for the best. Still he could see that the woman was his enemy.

While he was there a rap came at the door. Jack opened it and a man stood on the threshold who said he was from Sir Henry Clinton on a secret mission to Mr. Martin.

Jack asked him in. Mrs. Martin glared first at the stranger and then at Jack.

CHAPTER XI.—The Tragedy at Martin's.

Seeing that something was wrong, the stranger glanced uneasily around the room. But Jack never took his eyes off his face, and his right hand was handy to his pistol.

"What's the trouble, madam?" the stranger finally asked.

"He is the captain of the Iron Grays," said Mrs. Martin, pointing to Jack.

The man started and glared at Jack. Jack returned his gaze and both men's hands sought their weapons. Jack wore a sword and pistols. The stranger appeared to be unarmed. But Jack knew full well he was not. Suddenly they both drew and fired. It was difficult to say which fired first, so near together came both reports. But the stranger staggered back against the wall and tried to draw another pistol. Just as he got it half drawn he sank down to the floor. Both mother and daughter were too much horrified to cry out. They stood in a corner of the room glaring at the two men as if they were two tigers.

Suddenly the man revived. He drew his pistol to fire at Jack. But again the young patriot was too quick for him, and he got another bullet in the chest, while his own came nearer hitting Kittie than Jack.

Kittie turned to her mother and saw that she was going to faint.

"Water! Water, quick!" she screamed, and Jack made a break for the water pail which always stood on a shelf out on the rear piazza.

In a moment or two he returned with the pail. Kittie seized the gourd and dashed it nearly full of water into her mother's face. Jack then turned his attention to the person of the man on the floor. The loud gasps that came from him told that he was breathing his last. But he did not wait for him to die. He at once searched his pockets and took possession of all papers he found in them. When he rose to his feet he found Kittie standing by his side.

"Jack," she said, laying a hand on his shoulder, "this is awful, but you did right. If you had not killed him he would have killed you. Oh, this cruel war!"

"I am going to camp to get a squad of the Iron Grays to come here and bury him. Then they are to guard the house hereafter, or the whigs will burn it down. This is the headquarters of the king's spies in the Rapidan country, and I am going to take possession of it."

Jack went out and mounted Selim again. In less than a half hour he was back again with ten of the Iron Grays. They took the body of the dead Briton and buried him at midnight, and placed a line of guards around the house to make sure of arresting any more spies that might come along that way. The next morning the escort

sent with the prisoners to Long Cave returned, and Jack doubled the guard about the Martin place. In fact, he established a camp there, as it was only two miles from Miller's. Mrs. Martin grew more and more anxious about her husband, and got it into her head finally that Jack had hanged both him and Jim. Kittie came to him and said he would have to manage to let her father write to her or her mother in order to show that he was really alive.

"Let her go to Long Cave and see him if she wants to," said Jack.

When Kittie told her mother what Jack had said she at once made up her mind to go to Long Cave. Kittie was to remain at home and take care of the house. Two days later she set out in her family carriage, escorted by five of the Iron Grays, who had volunteered to do so. The carriage had gone about fifteen miles when it was halted by a band of Tories. The Iron Grays at once began to fight. One of them was killed and the others captured, save one, who escaped by the fleetness of his horse. It was late in the night when the single remnant of the escort reached camp and asked for Captain Jack.

"What's the matter?" Jack asked.

"The carriage was attacked and captured about fifteen miles from here," was the reply.

Jack immediately mounted Selim, and called for fifty of the Iron Grays to go with him. In ten minutes they were off like the wind, the escaped escort leading the way. They went as if racing against time, and the stars never shone on a more gallant band of young patriots than they were.

CHAPTER XII.—The Old Deacon's Conversion

In a few hours they reached the spot where the carriage had been halted. The vehicle was destroyed—smashed to pieces, but the horses and harness were gone. Two dead Tories and one of the Iron Grays lay on the ground where they had fallen.

"Bury him where he fell, lieutenant," said Jack, "and mark his grave. We'll remove his remains to his home after the war ends."

It was done, and in another hour they were on the trail of the band of Tories who had stopped the carriage. They met an old negro in the woods, who told them that the "sojers" had left a white woman at his cabin more dead than alive, and that the "sojers" had come over to Mitchell's creek, a small settlement, with a store and blacksmith shop as a center. On going to the negro's cabin, Jack was thunderstruck at finding the woman there to be no other than Mrs. Martin.

"Oh, Jack!" she sobbed, on seeing him, "I am nearly dead! They used me horribly! Oh, if I could only die and be at rest!" and she wrung her hands in agony of both mental and physical distress.

"We are in pursuit of your captors, Mrs. Martin," he replied, "and when we have caught them if you will point out those who ill-used you, I will inflict on them any punishment you may suggest."

She merely covered her face with her hands and sobbed.

"Aunty," said Jack, "can you take care of her till to-morrow?"

"Yes, massa, 'deed I kin," was the reply.

"Well, do so, and I will pay you well," he said, and then taking the hand of the poor woman in his, he added:

"We are going now, but to-morrow I'll bring a carriage for you. Yours was utterly destroyed. You will be safe here, as no one is likely to come here to such humble quarters."

He kissed her hand and was off with his gallant boys in hot pursuit of the Tories. They followed them to Mitchell's Creek and found them carousing at the store, where they had taken a barrel of rum from the storekeeper. Ere the Tories were aware of the presence of the boys, the Iron Grays had surrounded them.

"Surrender!" cried Jack.

The dumfounded Tories began firing, and the next moment the Iron Grays gave them a volley that laid out at least a dozen and wounded as many more.

"Charge!" yelled Jack, drawing his sword and dashing headlong at the confused mass.

It was a slaughter for a few minutes, after which the Tories retreated within the store.

"Surrender, or we'll fire the house!"

"We surrender!" cried a score at once.

Then Jack told the leader of the Tories to come out first, and he came.

Jack ordered him to be bound like a criminal, and then put all the others under guard. He lost but two boys in the fight. They were bound there, and then the command went into camp for the night. The next day he marched the prisoners back to where they had attacked the carriage. He brought a carriage along for Mrs. Martin, which he had borrowed from a patriot family. When he reached the cabin of the old negro, Jack asked Mrs. Martin to point out to him, if she could, the man who had ill-used her. She had to be brought out in a chair. When she saw the leader of the Tories she gave a shudder, and, turning to Jack, asked:

"Would you hang a man for me?"

"Yes, if he deserved to be hanged."

"That man there deserves to be hanged," and she pointed to the leader of the band.

"That is enough. He shall be hanged at once," and he gave the order for his execution.

The man made no resistance. He seemed to have lost the power of resistance, so great was his horror at the fate that menaced him. Mrs. Martin asked that he be hanged where she could see him, and it was done.

"Now, Jack Randolph, and all you Iron Grays!" she cried out, her eyes ablaze, "I have been loyal to the king—I and my husband—up to this hour. But henceforth I am with you in your fight against the king, and if my husband and son do not join me in hating the king even as I do, I will disown both of them!"

The Iron Grays cheered themselves hoarse over her speech. They hugged each other and shook hands over the result of their struggle to capture the Tory band.

"Mrs. Martin," said Jack, turning to the lady, "we are ready to escort you to Long Cave or back to your home, just as you may wish."

"Let me go to Long Cave," she said. "I want to see my husband and son. If they do not pro-

nee against the king after they hear my story, I shall disown them."

They placed her in the carriage and set out for Long Cave, where Colonel Maxwell held a strong post on the banks of the Rapidan. The arrival of the Iron Grays was quite a sensation to the Continental Congress. They were anxious to see the young hero who had given the enemy so much trouble on the Rapidan. They cheered him to the skies when they saw him. Jack explained to Colonel Maxwell why he had come in person to the Continental Congress. He wanted to make sure that Mrs. Martin should have a chance to talk with her husband and son. The father and son were brought to Colonel Maxwell's quarters, and in a private room there the wife and mother had told them her story. What it was no one else knew. But Colonel Maxwell and Captain Jack Randolph were sent for. They went in, and the first thing the old Tory said was:

"I am a Whig from now till my death. Down with the king! Jack, give me your hand and say you forgive me."

Jack gave him his hand and said:

"I freely forgive you, sir, and congratulate you."

"You'll have some trouble in keeping me from murdering every kingman I come across."

"Keep cool; keep cool," said Jack. "How is it with you, Jim?"

"I am with father," said Jim, "and am going to be killing if I ever get the chance."

CHAPTER XIII.—Jack and Kittie.

There was a man's conversation so complete and so real as that of father and son from the time they joined the Continental Congress. They both took the oath of allegiance and were released from the army so that they might go home with Mrs. Martin, escorted by the Iron Grays. When they returned home Kittie flew to meet them. At the gate she saw that the carriage was not the familiar old vehicle the family had so long used. She thought some stranger had called, and stopped to look at the face of her father as he stepped out to get out.

"Father!" she cried. "And mother and brother! Jack, what miracle have you performed?"

"We have brought them all back to you, Kittie," said Jack, laughing in his quiet way, as he stepped from his horse to open the gate for her.

She flew to her parents and gave each of them a warm welcome. Then she hugged Jim, so delighted to see him with the Iron Grays and so happy on good terms with them. The news that a thousand redcoats were coming to the Iron Grays for the repeated drubbings given the dragons and Tories. Jack had given order for all the squalls to be put to rest and sent a courier to Colonel Maxwell to tell him the news.

"Hello, my boy," said old Bill Martin, "for a good send. Let me go with you this time."

"Why, father!" cried Kittie, in utter amazement. "Have you turned rebel? Are you going to join the King George?"

"Down with the king!" cried the old man, in a loud tone of voice.

"Down with the king!" chorused all the Iron Grays, still in their saddles outside the house.

"Down with the king and all kingsmen!" yelled Jim. "Let me go with you, Jack! Let me go with you," and he rushed at Jack and grasped his hand.

"Yes, of course," said Jack, "but your father had better stay at home and take care of your mother."

Kittie was like one in a dream. She was too happy to think of the danger her brother was going to expose himself to in joining the Iron Grays. She did not once think of the one thousand redcoats who were coming to exterminate the band of brave boys who had so gallantly defended their homes for the last six months.

"Oh, let's have a dance, boys!" she cried. "Let us have a dance to-night!"

"Where are the girls?" Lieutenant Miller asked.

"Here's one," she answered; "send for more. You could have twenty or thirty here by sunset. Let them ride on the Iron Grays behind a soldier boy. We can have two fiddles and a banjo."

Jack at once proceeded to send about twenty boys out for the pretty daughters of the patriots in the neighborhood. To Lieutenant Miller he whispered confidentially:

"Go over to Parson Withers' place and see if you can get him to come, Tom."

"Eh? The parson would be shocked at the dancing!" protested Tom.

"Never mind; go ahead," said Jack, "and bring one or the other back with you," and he pushed him toward his horse as if he wanted him to be off at once.

The sun was just disappearing behind the trees when the first batch of girls arrived. Kittie ran out and welcomed them with a hearty word and kiss.

"Oh, Kittie, is it true?" Sally Jones asked.

"What is true?"

"That your father is against the king?"

"Yes; every word is true, and Brother Jim has joined the Iron Grays," said Kittie.

As twilight advanced the couples kept coming; not one of the twenty came back without a girl, and a number of old folks came in wagons with other girls, all anxious to hear more about how old Bill Martin came to turn Whig, as the patriots were called in those days. Several old negroes with violins, banjos, and reed pipes were on hand to make music for the merry dancers.

There were no more couples than the Iron Grays could hold for dancing, and the dancing was done there.

Jack led off with Kittie, and Lieutenant Metcalf and Jennie B. ka followed. Tom Miller was Sally Jones's partner, and a merrier crowd had not gathered anywhere on the Rapidan since the war broke out. When Jack had danced some time with Kittie he led her out into the yard under the apple trees to get some fresh air.

"Kittie Martin," he said, "standing around her waist. 'Do you know, is in the house drinking hip-hip to your father. Do you know what he can do for you and me?'"

"Why, what can he do for you and me?"

"He can make us man and wife, and that is what I want him to do this very night."

"Oh, Jack, do you mean that? Do you want me for your wife?"

"Yes, Kittie. I love you more than I ever loved any human being before. Will you be my wife?"

"Yes; but——"

"But what, sweetheart?"

"It is so sudden. I—I—can't marry you to-night."

"Why not? I am going to leave at midnight and may not see you again for weeks or maybe months."

"Oh, must you go so soon?"

"Yes. The enemy is coming down the river road and we must be on the move to concentrate all the force we can muster against him. Won't you let me go away as your husband?"

"Yes, if mother and father will consent," she

"Then come into the house with me. I'll speak to them at once," and he took her hand and led her into the house and into the presence of her parents, the dominie, and a dozen other old people, all patriots.

"Mr. Martin," he said to the old deacon, who was feeling quite mellow after a half dozen mugs of flip, "Kittie and I are dead in love with each other, and I have asked her to let the dominie marry us to-night. The Iron Grays must be in the saddle at midnight, and I want to marry before I go. Will you consent?"

"Yes," said the old man. "Take her and my blessing for both of you."

Mrs. Martin took the blushing Kittie in her arms and cried over her a bit, but was willing to give her to Jack. Then the old folks had to kiss her and shake hands with Jack, after which the young people were called in from the barn to witness the ceremony. They were the most astonished lot of young people ever seen, and the surprise was the cause of the engagement of two other couples on the spot. After the ceremony they all danced again, the young bride and bridegroom leading on as in the first dance. Then, as the Iron Grays had to leave at midnight, the dance ended to let them take their girls back home again. Jack took leave of Kittie in the presence of the entire band, she throwing her arms about his neck and bursting into tears.

Early the next morning Jack and over one hundred of the Iron Grays advanced half-way to Long Cave. Jack found out that a column of the British had crossed the river to chastize the patriots on the other side. Not having enough men to attack the British he sent a call for volunteers from the surrounding country. A large number of farmers answered the call. Jack assembled his force across the river and threw up breastworks to oppose the British force. Late one day in the afternoon the British arrived in front of the breastworks and the commander ordered Jack's force to surrender in the name of the king.

CHAPTER XIV.—The End of the Big Raid.

"The king be hanged!" said Jack. "If you want us come to take us."

The defiant answer to his summons angered the British officer to such a degree that he immediately

ordered a charge, and the trained soldiers of old England obeyed. They went like animated machines, with regular tread and defiant air.

"Steady, men!" cried Jack, in clear, ringing tones. "Aim true and shoot to kill! Keep cool and load again as fast as you can! Now let 'em have it! Fire!"

The entire front line of the enemy went down. The British officers had never before seen such destructive fire, and they had hard work to hold their men up to the charge. But discipline prevailed finally, and the red line again advanced. Again that withering volley met them, and the front melted away. Still they rushed forward, firing as they came, and in a few moments only the breastworks were between them and the sturdy patriots. There they exchanged volley after volley right into each other's faces. But human endurance has a limit, and, after losing one-half of their number, the redcoats fled in dismay from such tremendous slaughter.

Then it was that the Iron Grays ran to their horses and sprang into the saddle. With wild cheers they went after the retreating enemy like an avalanche. It was then that they were taught a lesson on the value of discipline and drill. The British leader threw his men into a square and repelled the charge with a severe loss to the boys. Instantly Jack saw his mistake. Though demoralized by their repulse, the enemy still outnumbered the Iron Grays two to one. He saw that they would be almost annihilated if they charged again against that square, and at once gave the order recalling them. Prompt as they were to obey, several were shot out of their saddles ere they could get out of range.

The charge had cost them a dozen lives, and Jack, pale and sad, saw that he had made a terrible mistake. He had acted on the belief that the enemy, panic-stricken, would be scattered to the winds by the charge. In later years Napoleon made the same mistake more than once. But the enemy did not renew the attack, and the Iron Grays, once more behind the breastworks, taunted them, telling them to come on again.

At last the retreat began, and Jack decided to let them go, as he was not strong enough to pursue them. But the British officers knew that Maxwell was strong enough to head them off and complete the ruin started by the Boy Raiders of the Rapidan, so they marched all night long to make their escape. When the enemy was gone, the victors made the welkin ring with their shouts. They took Jack Randolph on their shoulders and marched around with him.

"Stop, men!" he cried. "There are our wounded friends to look after. It is a glorious victory for us, and yet our loss has been severe."

Just as the farmers who had rallied to Jack were taking leave of the Iron Grays to return to their homes, a courier from up the river came dashing up, his steed covered with foam, and asked for Captain Randolph. Jack asked him what he wanted and was told that General Lafayette had sent to ask his co-operation in the attempt he was then making to capture Benedict Arnold, who was then invading Virginia. Jack read the note and was silent for some minutes. It was a high compliment to him and his brave boys, coming from such a distinguished source.

"I will give you an answer when I have consulted my comrades," he said to the bearer of the note.

Then he called the Iron Grays around him and read the note to them which Lafayette had written.

"We were organized to defend the homes on the Rapidan," he said to them, when he had finished reading the letter. "I will not lead you anywhere else except with your consent. Shall we go and help the Marquis de Lafayette?"

"Yes!" yelled every boy in the command.

"Then we will go. Courier, we are ready to follow you back to your commander."

Half an hour later they were on their way up the river, 75 strong. Everywhere the farmers' wives and daughters cheered them as they rode by. The news of their splendid campaign against tremendous odds had gone before them, and everybody wanted to do them honor. Two days later the young French general received them with his little army drawn up in line. He embraced Jack when he met him, saying:

"I am only too happy to take such a brave defender of the country by the hand."

Jack hardly knew what to say in reply to such a compliment from such a source. But he remarked that he and his boys organized to defend the Rapidan, and had done the best they could.

"Yes," added the marquis, "and when a soldier does all he can, he has done his whole duty. If I had 10,000 such soldiers as your boys, I could drive the English into the ocean if he did not surrender. Will you take command of my second?"

"With pleasure, if you will let me select my men."

CHAPTER XVI. A Terrible Retribution.

The marquis told him he could choose such men and as many as he wanted.

"I want none but my own boys—the Iron Grays," he replied.

"What! You do not want any of the Continentals?"

"No, general. They would not like to be officered by a beardless boy who does not even belong to the army. I would rather have my own Iron Grays. They know me and I know them. They have their own horses and guns. We ask for nothing but our rations."

"I have not seen such unselfish patriotism since I landed in America," said the marquis, and he turned to one of his aids and gave an order that the Iron Grays should have full rations and the best that could be provided. It was hard work for the Iron Grays, but they were such splendid riders, so daring and quick, that the enemy was harassed beyond endurance. They frequently had fights with the enemy's scouts, and one day Jim Martin, who had proven himself to be one of the best fighters in the command, was captured, together with Sergeant Botts and three privates. Those who escaped came back quickly for assistance.

"We must rescue them at all hazards," said Jack, and he gave the order for the pursuit at once.

He led off, followed by the others as if in a

hurdle race, and for nine miles such a ride of forty men had never been known before in all the colonies. People who saw them go by believed that a death-dealing enemy was behind them and that they were all riding for their lives. At the end of the nine miles they came up with the enemy's scouts, and a fight, short, sharp and decisive, took place.

"Down with the redcoats!" yelled the Iron Grays, as they dashed into them, and in a few minutes so many of them were down that the others turned and fled to save themselves. The captain of the dragoons tried to cut down Sergeant Botts as he left. He only wounded him.

"Catch the officer alive!" cried Jack, and a dozen patriots set off after him. He was soon stopped by a bullet in his horse's head. Then he was seized as he scrambled to his feet after the horse fell. They brought him back.

"Why did you try to cut down one of your prisoners?" Jack asked him.

"He was not a prisoner of war," was the reply.

"Why is he not? We are in the command of General Lafayette."

"Yet you are not soldiers and are not entitled to any consideration as such."

"If that be true, we are not bound to treat you any better than. Lieutenant Miller, see that this cowardly brute is decently hanged to that limb up there. Sergeant Botts, you may have the pleasure of giving the order to pull him up."

"Let me do it, captain!" cried Jim Martin. "He was brutal to us all when we were captured. He swore that we would all be hung as soon as he got to headquarters. Didn't he, sergeant?"

"Yes," replied Sergeant Botts, who was bleeding profusely from a saber cut on the head.

"Captain," said Jim, riding forward, "I am going to tell you something before I use my saber on you. Up to a month ago my father and mother were the most loyal subjects of the king in all America. Our home was regarded as the home and refuge of every spy and emissary the king's officers sent out in that direction. They came, were fed, clothed, and aided in every way, and I piloted them all over the Rapidan country, and twice shot at the captain of the Iron Grays to kill him for his rank disloyalty to the king. At last I and my father were arrested and sent under guard to Long Cave. My mother asked permission to visit us, and a guard of five Iron Grays escorted her on the way. One of the Iron Grays, a man of fine appearance, the captain's friend, one of the escort, captured the carriage, dismounted it, and I saw my mother, the most loyal woman in the land. The Iron Gray pulled her out, and brought her back. From that day she swore that no man would ever see her again, and vowed to die for her. I had no idea if she did not fight the king with all the strength they were capable of. When we heard her story we cried, 'Down with the king!' and have been fighting him ever since. I have told you all this, that you and your comrades may know why the country will not have King George to reign over them. I am now going to give you a cut. I believe you rode about thirty years before you struck the sergeant. I am going to do the same," and he rode back that distance, and, wheeling his horse, dashed at him like a whirlwind, over his hand.

The Iron Grays looked on with bated breath. Swish! A cry of horror went up from the Iron Grays and prisoners alike. The captain's head toppled from his shoulders and bounded to the ground followed by the tumble of the body from the saddle.

"It was his fault," said Jim, as he rode back. "He moved and tried to escape the blow. It wasn't his fault that the sergeant has his head on his shoulders, though."

"I believe every word of that," said Jack, "though I didn't dream that such a thing was going to happen to him."

Then turning to the other prisoners, he said:

"You may be exchanged some day. Don't fail to tell your officers that we try pretty hard to do as we are done by. It's not a very Christian way of doing things, but then we are not dealing with a Christian people."

He then gave the order to return toward the patriot lines, and the Iron Grays moved off like the well-trained, daring young soldiers they were.

CHAPTER XVI.—Conclusion.

One day a British vessel appeared in the James river below, having on board several emissaries of the king, who were armed with power to make certain promises in the king's name, backed by liberal offers of gold, to such of the patriots whose influence would be worth having.

"General," said Jack to General Lafayette one day, "if you will let us have it when we get it we will capture that vessel."

"Indeed! You have my permission then. As you are not in the Continental army all that you capture from the enemy is yours. That is a law of war."

"Then we'll see what we can do," said the young patriot.

He had ascertained through an old negro that about half the crew were in the habit of landing, during the moonlight nights, on the opposite banks of the stream and going short distances into the country for fresh fruits and vegetables. They well knew that there were not troops there to oppose them, hence they became quite bold in their movements. Before sunrise the next morning they were on the other side of the river some ten or twelve miles above the vessel. They remained there until night, and then they mounted their steeds and made a dash down the river road. When within two miles of the sloop they halted, left their horses in charge of ten of their number and pushed on down the road on foot. When halfway down they heard some singing on the night air, and in a little while learned that the sailors were on shore again and having a jolly time. Jack immediately went about effecting their capture. They were gathering fruit in an orchard and had stacked their arms under a huge apple tree. By a sudden dash the Iron Grays got between them and their arms.

"Surrender!" cried Jack, as his boys covered them with their rifles.

"We surrender, cap'n," cried out the bos'n in charge.

"Very good—just in time," said Jack, and they were marched up to one of the negro cabins, where they were all securely bound.

There were just 40 of them.

Jack lost no time in stripping off their clothes and putting them on his own boys. Some of them made ludicrous fits, but that mattered little. They were for temporary use only.

When the exchange was made, the five Iron Grays for whom there were no uniforms were left in charge of the prisoners while the others were marched down to the boats that were to take them back to the sloop.

They found a marine in each boat when they reached the river.

Jack ordered them ashore and they came, were captured, and sent to the rear securely bound.

Then they went out to the sloop in the boats, and were challenged by the sentry on the deck.

"That's all right—here's your fruit. Take this big melon as I toss it up," and Tom Miller was so perfectly easy in his way that the guard readily did as he asked.

In a minute or two they were all on deck, and then several bags full of fruit were drawn up. The crew gathered around to help themselves to the fruit.

Jack gave a whistle, and each Iron Gray selected his man and put a bullet through his head.

"Surrender!" cried Jack, as the captain of the sloop and two of his officers came up on deck, sword in hand.

"To whom shall I surrender?" the captain asked, dumfounded, and finding his vessel in the hands of an enemy and his crew laying dead on the deck.

"To Captain Randolph, of the Continental army," replied Jack.

"There has been treachery. I yield to superior force," and he presented his sword, which Jack took. The other officers did likewise, and then the few other marines on board were secured.

He then made a thorough search of the vessel and found an immense treasure chest on board—enough to give each member of the Iron Grays about 1,000 pounds each in gold, which was a snug little fortune in those days.

This he secured and sent on shore by Lieutenant Metcalf, after which he took away the prisoners and set fire to the sloop.

They all placed their prize money in a safe place and sent messengers home upon the Rapidan, telling them of the good news.

When they reached Miller's, Kittie was there at the head of a crowd of women, with garlands and smiles for the brave boys. She flew to meet Jack. He sprang from his saddle and clasped her in his arms. They had been separated seven months.

It was a joyful time all along the Rapidan, for the Iron Grays disbanded for a month and went home, while the old veterans went back to Lafayette.

Jack took his bride to his own home. He bought a farm near his father's with his prize money, and there he lived till he died fifty years later. He had seven children and lived happily. Tom Miller married Jack's sister, and Metcalf became a congressman.

Next week's issue will contain "MONEY AND MYSTERY; OR, HAL HALLERTON'S TIPS IN WALL STREET."

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(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XVI.

Tom West's Marksmanship Brings the Message Back to Him.

It just happened that the street was almost deserted at that moment, and although Tom raised a cry there was nobody to stop the man who was running away with the telegram. Two men heard the boy cry out and saw the man running away, but they made no attempt to stop him, for the fellow had drawn a pistol and held it ready for use.

The man was a fleet runner, and Tom, fearing that he would get out of sight, raised his automatic and pulled the trigger. The shot was taken while the boy was running at top speed, and the sole result was to tear the hat from the head of the fugitive.

The man didn't even turn when the hat was torn from his head by the bullet from the revolver, but kept on at the same fast gait. Now, however, knowing that he was being shot at, and probably knowing that Tom was a marksman of repute, he ran slightly from side to side, so as to disconcert the aim of the armed pursuer.

As a result of this wavering course the next bullet from the automatic intended for the body of the thief struck him in the right arm, inflicting a wound that was probably slight, but which was effectual in benumbing the hand and arm.

The thief had kept the stolen message in his right hand, the prompt pursuit of the boy mail carrier giving him no time to put it in his pocket, and when the stinging bullet took all the sensation out of the hand the telegram fell from his fingers to the ground.

This happened near a street lamp and Tom saw the message fall. He was just about to press the trigger of the automatic again, but refrained from doing so, for he reasoned that if the man stopped to pick up the paper that he would be able to drop him without question.

But the thief had had two samples of the marksmanship of the boy who could shoot so well while on a dead run, and had no desire to make a stationary target of himself for even two seconds, so he kept on without an instant's halt, came to a corner, dodged around it, and was lost to view.

Very thankfully, the boy ran to where the message lay on the ground and picked it up with a sigh of relief. He had not the slightest doubt that the man who had snatched it from his hand

on the hotel porch was a member of Dan Despard's band, and it made him feel good to think that the information that the bandit leader had so often held up the mails to obtain would not get to him by any neglect on his, Tom's part.

The shots had been heard, and a number of people came running up to learn the cause, but Tom merely told them that he had been robbed and that the thief had made his escape. Such things were not so rare in that town on the border of civilization and did not cause more than a mere ripple of curiosity.

With the letter safely stowed in an inside pocket, Tom walked thoughtfully back to the hotel.

"I think I understand how this thing came about," he said to himself when he was once more seated on the hotel porch. "Dan Despard knew that I was bound for Little Medicine, and was sure that I was on some business for Captain Norcross, for the fact that I was riding a cavalry horse, added to the conversation that Brocky heard in the postoffice, made such a surmise almost positive knowledge.

"Then he discovered that I had made my escape and at once sent this fellow to watch me.

"Without doubt I have been spied upon ever since I rode into town, and I suppose that rascal was close at hand when I sent the message to headquarters, and was looking at me when I got the answer.

"I wonder if he'll try to get it away from me before I get out of town to-morrow morning?"

"It's true that I winged him. I don't know how badly, but he may be able to do mischief yet, and, for that matter, he may have a comrade. It's pretty warm weather for sleeping boxed up, but I guess I'll have to close the window of my bedroom tonight and see that the door is well locked.

"However, I think that it is more likely that the fellow will get out of town at once and carry the news to his captain, and the latter may watch the road all night, with the idea that I may take a trip in the dark to Silver City in order to deliver the telegram.

"Well, I'm on my guard now, and it will not be an easy matter to get the message from me."

When he arose to go to his room he looked keenly all around, but saw nothing suspicious. When he reached his room he locked the door and then closed the window and fastened the catch with which it was provided.

Then, without removing his clothes, he put out the light and lay down on the bed, and he was so tired after the experiences of the day that he at once fell fast asleep.

Ordinarily Tom was just such a sleeper as a hearty, healthy boy of his age might naturally be expected to be, and when he was once in dreamland was not to be easily awakened until he had slept many hours, but on this occasion the fact that he was guarding a telegram of importance was enough to disturb his slumber, and make him sleep restlessly.

He did not know how long he had been asleep when he suddenly awoke, conscious of some strange sound.

(To be continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

SUN'S RAYS IGNITE BED.

Through a flaw in the window pane a hot sun focused its rays upon the bed on which seven-months old Maggie Perkovich, Benwood, W. Va., was sleeping. The bed was set afire and the baby burned to death.

The fire, which started in the child's bedclothes, was not discovered until it had gained considerable headway, and before it was extinguished the house was partly destroyed.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS BY WOODEN HAND.

The latest device to simplify the task of the auto truck driver is a painted wooden hand which is swung from the front of his machine at street corners to warn other cars that he is about to stop or turn.

"The hand comes out when the driver pulls the cord," said a traffic policeman. "It's a good thing, too, as lots of these truck drivers are too lazy to put out their own hands in the usual way. It's distinctive and gives a clear signal to cars behind."

THE SPEED OF ANIMALS.

Few know just how fast or slow they are, but an interesting computation by scientists is designed to throw light on the matter.

A riding horse covers forty inches while walking, while at a jog trot it covers eleven feet in a second. The two-minute horse, forty-four feet in a second. The leisurely ox moves over only two feet a second when hitched to a wagon and about twenty inches when attached to a plow. The elephant, which can pull more than six horses, moves only about four and one-half feet a second, and running as rapidly as it can is able to travel but eighteen feet a second.

The lion is claimed to run faster than the swiftest running horse, which is from 80 to 100 feet a second, according to the country through which it is compelled to travel.

Some claim a hare can travel at the rate of sixty feet a second, while others claim it cannot travel more than half that distance. All deer are speedy animals. A roebuck has been known to cover seventy-four feet a second when pursued by dogs. The giraffe is said to pass over the ground at the rate of about fifty feet a second, while the kangaroo covers ten to fourteen feet a second. A tortoise five inches long makes about half-inch in a second.

WATER FROM BEAVER DAM SAVED PEAR CROP.

Water from two beaver dams saved the pear crop of growers in the Entiat district, Washington, recently. There has been a shortage of water for irrigation purposes because of the dring up of Entiat Creek. Despite rigid enforcement of the User's Rights Law, the supply dwindled until drought threatened the pear harvest within three weeks of marketing. Horace Mann, the district gauger, went up into the mountains to investigate the source of the creew and discovered that

beavers had dammed the water by erecting two large obstructions across a flat valley.

The dams were opened and enough water was released to save the entire crop and then again closed to save the lives of the little builders.

That beaver are one of Washington's greatest assets and have proved themselves of more value to farmers than gold during droughts is the belief of every grower in the Entiat section.

Damages by such fur-bearing animals are easily offset by the amount of good accomplished in the bulding of dams and reservoirs.

Spring floods are diminished by numerous dams across streams which serve to provide a more constant flow of water for irrigation purposes.

Although beaver are protected in this State, next January an open season will permit trappers to slaughter them for thirty days.

A big conference of growers and sportsmen will be held at Wenatchee Aug. 15 to protest the death sentence of this valuable animal at the hands of the Legislature.

Beaver are thriving wonderfully in all the water courses of the Northwest.

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The Counterfeiter's Daughter

By HORACE APPLETON.

The Barker residence, on Vernon avenue, Chicago, had for a long time stood empty.

The placard "To Let," which was pasted on its front, had almost become illegible from the beating of the elements against it.

The elegant lawn which fronted the house had become unkempt and slovenly, being overgrown with ugly weeds, which had choked and crowded out the beautiful flowers that had brightened the beautiful place and made it a pleasure to its owner and a matter of pride to his wealthy neighbors.

During the occupancy of the mansion by Mr. Barker and his family it had been the scene of many notable social gatherings, and when Mr. Barker announced his intention to rent his house and spend two or three years abroad, society received the intelligence with regret, regarding his intention to go from their midst as an almost irreparable loss to Garden City society.

Speculation was lively as to who would be the next to occupy the old mansion, and in what way they would fill the gap made by Mr. Barker's removal.

But speculation seemed to be useless for a long time, for no one came to occupy the house, and the neighbors saw with sadness the decay into which it was falling.

Then the sign "To Let" was taken down, and the intelligence went forth that the Barker mansion had at last found a tenant.

Who the newcomer was, or what were his antecedents or occupation, were mysteries which even the most inquisitive gossips of the neighborhood were unable to penetrate.

The most that they could learn was that he was a wealthy banker from New York, who, having recently lost his wife, had concluded to leave that city, and with his only daughter, a young lady of eighteen, settle down in some Western city, where he would get away from social influences which his sad bereavement had made him anxious to be free from; that he had been a prominent society leader in the metropolis; but since the death of his wife he had become so cast down with grief that he had expressed a desire to retire altogether from society and its pleasures; and that, the better to carry out this object and be free from all the temptations, he had left New York and come to Chicago, where he was unacquainted.

This intelligence was received with regret by the neighbors, who had hoped that the new tenant would in some way take Mr. Barker's place in society, and by his efforts give the same eclat to social enjoyments that its late occupant and owner had.

Mr. Hendon, for that was the newcomer's name, seemed firm in his intention to remain exclusive, for all invitation for him to join the neighbors in social intercourse was positively and politely declined.

His daughter, who appeared to be an exceed-

ingly modest and pretty young woman, seemed anxious to share her father's desire for exclusiveness and grief, and firmly defied all the efforts of her neighbors to become acquainted with her.

She seldom appeared on the street except in company with her father, and when she did so was always clad in a deep suit of mourning attire, and comported herself with a demureness which was quite unnatural in a female so young and handsome.

However, this was overlooked, in consideration of the fact that she had recently lost her mother, and the neighbors respected her grief and that of her father, and made no further effort to obtrude their society upon them.

The Hendons had been living in Chicago only a few months when a skillfully executed counterfeit on the First National Bank of the city made its appearance.

The notes which were counterfeited were of the \$2, \$5 and \$10 denominations, and their circulation became so large that the bank officers became frightened, and at once instituted efforts to discover the party or parties who had set them afloat.

Chance brought me to Chicago at this time, and inquiry among my fellow detectives in the Garden City informed me of the fact that the most important case that they had on hand at the time was the discovery of the author of some counterfeited notes on the First National Bank.

I requested permission of the chief of the detective force of the city to try my hand at detecting out the rascal, which was readily granted.

The second day after my connection with the case I was walking through Vernon avenue, when I met John Boyle, whom I recognized as a very expert New York counterfeiter, who had been doing time in Auburn State prison for his participation in "queer" currency.

Although he knew me perfectly well, he did not recognize me when we met, but passed hurriedly by, and disappeared around the corner.

Feeling certain that he had a hand in the notorious currency then afloat in Chicago, I followed after him, determined to discover his whereabouts, being sure that if I found it I could soon trace the origin of the counterfeit currency.

He disappeared into the Barker mansion, and there being no chance for me to do anything further without unnecessarily exciting his suspicions, I determined to call on some of his neighbors to learn from them what was his status among them.

The first place visited was the elegant residence adjoining his.

I was met by the lady of the mansion, a woman of aristocratic bearing and mien.

In answer to my query regarding her neighbor she said the impression was general that he was a wealthy New Yorker, who had retired from business, and had removed to Chicago on account of the death of his wife, and in order to get rid of the obligations that society imposed upon him in the Metropolis.

"Since living here," he said, "he has kept himself very much excluded from society, and with his daughter, has baffled all our attempts at sociability. Until recently," she continued, "I never met either of them. My son succeeded,

Up to the present time she has continued her prophesy to be a counterfeiter's enemy, for the law sent the would-be groom and his companions away for a ten-years' stay in Solist Station, and thus proved of the exactness of her prediction.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 12, 1921.

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

PILLS KILL ARKANSAS BABY.

"Because they were sugar coated and tasted good," the four-year-old son of Alex Hulvey of Poplar Bluff, Mo., ate forty-five sugar coated pills which he found at the home of his parents. The child was thrown into convulsions and died within an hour.

FORD TRUCK HATCHES EGG.

It has developed that a Ford truck is also well adapted to hatching eggs. Three weeks ago a driver of a truck for a produce concern placed two eggs wrapped in a sack under the hood of his truck, and this week was rewarded with the "peep-peep" of a newly hatched chick.

The owner of the chick will name it either Henry or Lizzie, which will be determined as soon as the sex of the newcomer can be decided.

SWIMS 14 MILES ACROSS L. I. SOUND IN 11 HOURS.

Starting from Lordship Beach, Bridgeport, Conn., at 7:30 A. M. on September 1, Walter Patterson, long distance swimmer, covered the distance of fourteen miles across Long Island Sound to the Old Field Lighthouse near Huntington, L. I., in eleven hours. During his swim Patterson ran into a strong tide, which sapped his endurance and strength to such an extent that he collapsed when taken out of the water at the end of the swim.

SNAKE CUT FROM HAND.

While a number of citizens of the Ward Bridge community were seining in Richmond Creek a big moccasin fastened its fangs in the left wrist of Stonewall Cummins. Mr. Cummins attempted to choke the snake loose, but failed. The brother of Mr. Cummins then came to his rescue, and with his pocket knife in one hand and grasping the body of the snake in the other severed the reptile's head from the body. The mouth of the decapitated head had to be pried open before the wrist was released. Mr. Cummins received immediate medical attention and suffered but little from the effects of his experience.

2,621-YEAR-OLD "MITE" SHOWN IN COIN EXHIBIT.

Obsolete and rare coins, some bearing dates of hundreds of years before Christ, were in an exhibition of the American Numismatic Society, which opened its annual convention at Boston recently. Members from thirty-eight States and a dozen European and South American countries were here and contributed to the display of odd coins and paper currency.

Colonial coins were shown in great numbers, as were Baltimore groats, shillings, six-penny pieces and New York State pieces. What was said to be the oldest coin in the United States and of the smallest value ever issued was shown by a Southern collector. It was a "mite," with a face value of one-fifteenth of an American cent, and was coined in 700 B. C. at Aegina.

Rare American coins included one of the 1804 dollars, of which it is said only seven are in existence. Fifteen cent pieces, which were never put in circulation also were on display.

LAUGHS

He—The ship I last came over in had twin propellers. She—No wonder you had such a squally passage.

"Ah!" exclaimed the irate father, "how is it I catch you kissing my daughter, sir? Answer me, sir! How is it?" "Fine, sir; fine, indeed!" replied the young man.

Mistress—I'm sorry you want to leave, Ellis. Are you going to better yourself. Maid—No, m'm; I'm going to get married.

She presented herself at a fashionable wedding. "Friend of the bride or the bridegroom?" asked the usher. "I'm the fiancée of the organ blower," she explained, blushing.

Mrs. Bacon—There is a new hygienic rolling-pin on the market, and they are said to be harmless. Mr. Bacon—I don't believe any rolling-pin harmless if used as a missile.

Hotel Clerk (suspiciously)—Your bundle has come apart. May I ask what that queer thing is? Guest—This is a new patent fire-escape. I always carry it, so in case of fire I can let myself down from the hotel window. See? Clerk (thoughtfully)—I see. Our terms for guests with fire-escapes, sir, are invariably cash in advance.

Two married men were arguing as to what they would do if an opportunity presented itself of distinguishing themselves by performing some brave deed, when one remarked: "Listen here, old man, do you mean to tell me you would go through fire for your mother-in-law?" "Should have to, dear boy," replied the "old man," "she is dead!"

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

7 CROSS LAKE MICHIGAN IN ROWBOAT.

Seven students of the University of Illinois and Northwestern University who set out to cross Lake Michigan in a rowboat, arrived safely in St. Joseph, Mich., Sept. 7, according to word received here. The 68-mile trip was made in 23 hours. It is the first time on record since the days of Indian canoes that such a trip has been made by oarsmen. The boat sprung a leak a quarter of a mile after the start, and one man was compelled to bail from that point to the end of the journey. Four men were at the oars at all times.

FIRED BARN IN REVENGE.

That he set fire to the barn of C. E. Dice of Summer Hill in revenge for punishment inflicted on him last year by Dice's son, his school teacher, was the confession made before a local justice of the peace by Cletus Sult, aged 13, son of Alexander Sult, a neighbor. The boy was arrested by State troopers who have been investigating the mysterious fire that destroyed the Dice barn several weeks ago, with a loss of \$8,000.

The boy attended the Summer Hill school, taught by Calvin Dice, last winter, and was whipped rather severely on one occasion. During the summer Dice has been helping his father on the farm. The boy's father knew nothing of the fire until he was called to the office of the justice to become surety for \$1,000 to prevent his son being sent to jail.

LOST DIAMOND MINE.

A fabulous fortune awaits the man who discovers the lost diamond mine of Arkansas. There are indisputable indications that such a mine exists, according to a statement of Capt. Frederick C. Packer, an English diamond mining expert, who has twice come to this country from Kimberly, South Africa, in search of the lost mine.

Due to the peculiarity of the natural process by which diamonds were formed in the dim ages of the past, Captain Packer said, the indications of a diamond field may be found a long distance from the field. These indications have been found in a certain part of Arkansas, but the mine has not been discovered. It may be near the Oklahoma line, he asserts.

STRINGS OF WOOD INSTEAD OF SAWDUST.

There is in practical operation at the plant of the Wilson-Oswell Manufacturing Company, Jacksonville, Fla., a machine that is expected to revolutionize the saw mill industry by converting sawdust, now a waste product, into a valuable commodity.

This process, which gives out a long string, instead of the powdery sawdust generally familiar, consists of cutting the logs lengthwise with a rip-saw. The strip, as soft to the touch as

animal wool, make a splendid packing; but they have a greater value by far than that.

One of the great business problems of the country has been the shortage of wood pulp from which to manufacture print paper. It is said that this ribbon sawdust, as it is called, will meet every need of the paper manufacturers. Ordinary sawdust cannot be used, as paper of any kind requires a fibre of a certain length. In sawdust the fibre has been broken up, but it is preserved intact in the ribbon sawdust, and it has been estimated that the acids can separate the fibres within thirty minutes.

The log is laid lengthwise and is made fast by a small steam pump, or "canno," as it is called. The log sweeps back and forth into the teeth of a band saw, moving at an average speed of two miles a minute. As soon as the metal strikes the wood, there is a loud purr and the long, stringy shavings are thrown across the room like water from the nozzle of a fire hose. The carriage on which the log is mounted is reversible and the saw takes a double bite.

THE ARCHIMEDEAN MONKEY.

If the brain of a monkey can discover the principle of the lever, how near akin is it to Archimedes? Dr. W. T. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Gardens, certainly a well qualified student of animal life, both wild and domestic, is reported as follows by a correspondent of the International News Service:

"One of the most interesting cases I can attest is that of an orang-outang in this zoo, that discovered the principle of the lever.

"This beast decided that it wanted to tear down the running bars of its cage. It was not powerful enough to do so by an application of direct physical strength.

"After studying the situation and experimenting, it ripped down the bar of its trapeze, and using the bar as a lever managed to tear down the running bars.

"Furthermore, finding its own strength insufficient at one point, it called another orang-outang to help it.

"The orang-outang discovered for itself the principle of the lever just as truly as Archimedes discovered the principle of the screw.

"The majority of psychologists in studying animal psychology have access only to tame or domestic animals—the dog, the horse, the cat.

"But wild animals generally speaking are more intelligent than tame animals. This is natural because they are on their own resources to provide for themselves food and shelter and to preserve their lives.

"From long observation I am convinced that some of the higher wild animals have intelligence superior to that of the lowest form of human intelligence, and, therefore, I am willing to lay down the original proposition with little fear of scientific contradiction, that higher animals are just as likely to have souls as are lower members of the human race."

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

ATTACKED BY SEA GULLS.

Even the timorous seagull will turn. Alexander Duncan of Gauldry, on the River Tay, Fife-shire, was attacked by seagulls while walking along the sands between Tayport and Leuchers.

The gulls, numbering several hundred, evidently resented his intrusion into an area where their young were running in and out among the grass, and swooped down furiously upon him time after time. Mr. Duncan had to run a considerable distance before the gulls gave up the chase.

SPRINTS 160 MILES IN 28 HOURS AND 20 MINUTES.

A man forty-four years old, wearing running costume and Indian moccasins, turned off Broadway and hopped up the steps of City Hall at 1.20 o'clock P. M., Sept. 5, having made a continuous run from the State House at Albany, 160 miles, in twenty-eight hours and twenty minutes, with twenty minutes consumed in stops for lunch.

He is Samuel A. Johnson, semi-professional runner and newsboy, with a stand at 34th Street and Broadway.

It is doubtful if, since the days of Indian runners, this particular feat has ever before been accomplished. Indian runners probably never made it in so fast time, as the post road of to-day far outclasses any trail then existing as a sprinting path. Johnson, who has been running twenty-two years, made the journey to win a wager of \$1,000 that he could do it in less than thirty hours. The wager was made with Miss Margaret Gast, former woman motorcycle champion, who paced him in her machine.

The start was made at 9 A. M. Sunday. Hudson was reached, thirty-three miles, at 2.50 P. M., and a stop was made to eat. Immediately off again, he plugged along until 1 A. M., yesterday, when he increased his pace to a mile in six minutes and kept this up regularly until 4.30 o'clock. During the night his pacemaker had to keep ahead of him or behind him because of engine trouble, so that much of the way he sped in total darkness, once running full-tilt into a fence and often being blinded by automobile headlights he met.

Johnson's moccasins are of his own contrivance, consisting of a regular Indian moccasin with a thicker sole than usual. He was met in Harlem by Leonard M. Whitney of No. 140 Wadsworth Avenue, who rubbed him down at City Hall. On the way he consumed three cups of tea, three glasses of milk, three pieces of toast, six poached eggs, and a pound and a half of grapes.—N. Y. World.

65 RATTLER HUNTERS AT BARBECUE.

Sixty-five professional snakecatchers from the border region of south-west Texas and Mexico

were guests of W. A. King at the latter's snake farm near Brownsville, Texas, a few days ago. King sent invitations to these men to come to his place and attend a barbecue in their honor. All of them are in his employ as snake catchers. It was a picturesque gathering of Mexicans and Americans who have spent their lives in the open, studying the habits and haunts of the rattlesnake, which is the chief type of reptile dealt in by King.

The guests had a big time at the barbecue. When they had finished with the feast they sat around and talked about snakes. Some of them had thrilling stories to tell of their experiences. Pedro Saenz, who, for the last twenty years, has been a snake hunter in the Soto la Marina region of Mexico, told the story of how he lay down one night upon the ground to sleep and when he awoke the next morning he found his improvised bed surrounded by rattlesnakes—hundreds of them, according to Saenz.

He had taken the precaution to lay a hair rope around his bed when he lay down. No snake will attempt to cross a hair rope. This saved his life, he thinks. Saenz got busy when he found the multitude of snakes so close at hand and when he had finished with his long pole with the snare at the end of it he had collected more than three hundred of the venomous reptiles and had them all snugly placed in his stout gunny-sack.

King is the largest snake dealer in the United States, it is said. He has been in the business for many years. He supplies museums, shows and others throughout the country with reptiles. He also does quite a business of selling snake poison to chemists and medical men for experimental poison. All of the rattlesnakes and other venomous reptiles brought to his farm are made harmless by extracting the poison from their pouches, the cutting off of their fangs and the slitting of their poison bags. Each rattlesnake yields about a fourth of a tumblerful of green liquid poison.

The snake farm consists of a series of pens, each enclosed with a high, tight board fence. In the pens are piles of brush and grass where the snakes are kept until fattened and made ready for market. They are fed chiefly on live rats, which are trapped and turned loose in the pens. Snakes that are not well suited for exhibition purposes are killed and their fat converted into snake oil, which sells for a good price, it is stated. The oil is used chiefly as a remedy for rheumatism.

More than one hundred men and a few Mexican women are kept constantly in the field catching live rattlesnakes and other kind of reptiles for King. They are paid so much a pound for their catches, and are able to make good money. Some of the rattlesnakes brought in are of enormous size. The larger ones are usually skinned and their hides and rattles used for the manufacture of novelties.—N. Y. Sun.

PLUCK AND LUCK

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Broken Hills, another mining town that in its heyday had a population of 50,000, is also desolate. Early in 1919, when the town's products were selling at high figures, the miners struck and remained out two years, during which time the bottom fell from the metal markets. When the miners were ready to return to work, the operators found they could work the mines only at a loss.

Owners of the mines told the men of their problem and offered to work the properties, without profit, for the sake of the miners, if the men would take wage reductions of 25 per cent. The men voted down the proposals. It was charged that a gang of radicals led in the movement to defeat the return to work.



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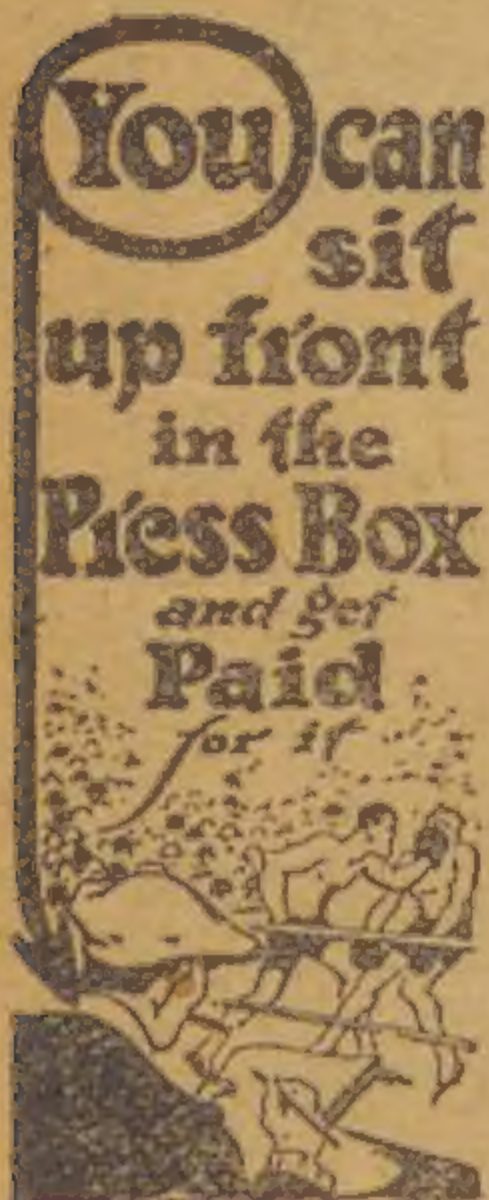
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